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THE MEHSERLE VERDICT AND AFTERMATH

Three-quarters of the people arrested after the ex-cop was convicted of manslaughter were not from Oakland

By Robert Gammon

Police officers in the United States are rarely convicted of criminal wrongdoing. But in Los Angeles jury last week found ex-BART cop **Johannes Mehserle** guilty of involuntary manslaughter in the fatal shooting of unarmed train rider **Oscar Grant** on January 1, 2009. The jury also convicted Mehserle of using a gun in the commission of a homicide. The gun-enhancement coupled with the felony involuntary manslaughter conviction means Mehserle will face five to fifteen years in prison when he is sentenced later this year.

In the hours immediately following the verdict demonstrators in downtown Oakland were mostly peaceful. The throng was clearly disappointed that Mehserle had avoided a second-degree murder conviction. After all, video of the shooting had shown Grant laying face down on the ground when Mehserle shot him in the back. However, except for a few protesters who seemed bent on violence, most of the demonstrators remained calm — as did Oakland police.

But then around 8 p.m., things began to unravel. Small bands of angry white anarchists, dressed in black, their faces painted black or wearing bandanas, did their best to excite the crowd. Looters then smashed the windows of a **Foot Locker** store on Broadway and began stealing sneakers. Apparently nothing quite says "Justice for Oscar Grant" like a new pair of Nikes.

About that time Oakland police, wearing armored riot gear, began advancing toward the demonstrators. Until then police had stationed themselves at Broadway and 12th Street allowing the protests to go on peacefully. But the cops eventually decided to end the demonstration and declared it "an unlawful assembly." Police slowly marched up Broadway toward 14th Street, where some peaceful demonstrators were playing chess as looters behind them started smashing more windows.

At that point, Oakland Councilwomen **Rebecca Kaplan** and **Jean Quan** entered the fray, locking arms with other demonstrators and creating a slowly moving blockade between helmeted police officers, who had donned their gas masks, and what was left of the peaceful protestors. The councilwomen, both of whom are running for mayor, slowly walked in front of the police, giving demonstrators time to clear out of the area before being overrun by law enforcement.

Ultimately, the councilwomen moved out of the way as police began arresting the chess players and other demonstrators before apprehending the looters and anarchists. Caught up in the arrests was Oakland school board member **Jumoke Hinton Hodge**, who was then forced to spend the night in jail, even though her only apparent crime was playing chess. Eventually, police arrested 78 people — of whom more than three-quarters came from outside Oakland, said Police Chief **Anthony Batts**. In short, the vast majority of troublemakers arrested after the verdict had descended on Oakland to use it as their personal playground.

Afterward, some of the peaceful protesters said police had acted rashly and aggressively. And while it is true that most demonstrators had done an admirable job of keeping outside agitators from taking over the protests, the police were in a tough situation. The marchers and looters had successfully integrated themselves into the crowd and were starting to wreak havoc, while using the peaceful demonstrators as a shield from police.

In the end, the general sentiment was that Oakland police had done a solid job of preventing the situation from getting too violent. And Batts made the right decision before the protests — after getting calls from Quan and counsel President **June Brunner** — to not use an ear-splitting sonic cannon recently procured by Alameda County.

As for Mehserle, his attorney **Michael Rains**, told the *Oakland Tribune* that he plans to ask the judge in the case to throw out the gun-enhancement conviction. Rains and other legal experts contend that the gun-enhancement charge required the jury to conclude that Mehserle intentionally fired his pistol at Grant. But the involuntary manslaughter verdict indicated that jurors believed Mehserle meant to use his Taser on Grant — and not his gun. If Rains is successful, Mehserle's sentence would be reduced to two to four years in prison and he might even be eligible for probation.

But even if that happens, the ex-BART cop could still face federal criminal charges. The **US Department of Justice** said after the verdict that it is examining whether to charge Mehserle with violating Grant's civil rights — the same federal charge levied against the four Los Angeles cops who brutally beat **Rodney King** but were acquitted in state court. Two of those four were eventually convicted of criminal civil rights violations and sentenced to thirty months in prison.

Three-Dot Roundup

Alameda City Councilwoman **Lena Tam** is under fire for allegedly leaking confidential city information to SunCal. The proposed private developer of Alameda Point. Alameda officials allege that the leaked information compromised the city's negotiations with SunCal. Tam, a longtime SunCal supporter, says the allegations are politically motivated because she is running for reelection this year. A new **Field Poll** shows that former Oakland Mayor **Jerry Brown** is in a statistical dead heat with **Meg Whitman**, while Senator — and Oakland resident — **Barbara Boxer** is slightly ahead of **Carly Fiorina**. The Field Poll also shows that **Proposition 23** on the November ballot is faring poorly with voters. The measure, bankrolled by two Texas oil companies, would indefinitely suspend California's landmark climate-change law. ●

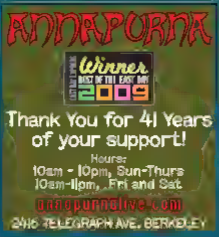
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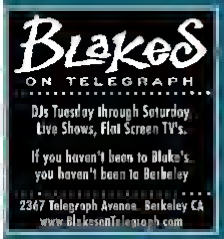
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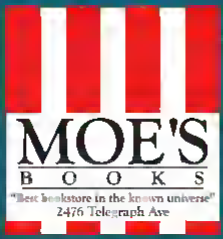

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Kay Kewley and Wayne Lyons show off their edible garden. Nate Settenach

ECO WATCH

ENDING PIEDMONT'S WATER HABIT

A group of gardeners have banded together to help bring native and drought-tolerant plants to the water-guzzling town

By Nate Settenach

The leafy East Bay enclave of Piedmont is known far its multimillion-dollar mansions with expansive front lawns and thirsty English-style gardens. But few people may realize the full extent of the city's water habit. Single-family households in the small town use more than twice as much water per day than do Berkeley residents, and nearly twice as much as do residents of Oakland, according to **East Bay MUD**. However following the lead of water-wise neighbors in those cities — where landscaping with native, drought tolerant, and edible plants is fully in vogue — a grassroots coalition of eco-minded Piedmont residents is beginning to push for a paradigm shift.

"There's a broader social movement that's out there across the country, even in a place like Piedmont ... taking steps toward a more sustainable future," said **Margaret Ovenden**, one of five co-chairs of the new group Called **Piedmont CONNECT** the organization — which formed in April and has swelled to 165 members — promotes environmental sustainability throughout Piedmont.

But according to data provided by East Bay Municipal Utility District, the effort to wean Piedmont residents off their heavy water use promises to be a long struggle. Single-family homes in the town used an average of 356 gallons of water per day from 2005 to 2009. By contrast, Berkeley and Oakland averaged just 171 and 191 gallons per day, respectively.

To find an East Bay community that uses as much water as Piedmont, you have to travel across the hills to the much warmer and drier Contra Costa County suburb of San Ramon. There, most single-family homes sit on large lots with midcentury landscaping and front and back lawns. Yet, at 594 gallons per day they use only slightly more water than Piedmont residents. In other words, Piedmonters have plenty of room for improvement.

But there are indications that members of the community are open to change. One of Piedmont CONNECT's first ventures was organizing a mid-June tour of eco-friendly gardens maintained by the homeowners themselves. It proved so popular that tour organizer **Anne Wemberger** had to stop registration at seventy and turned away more than thirty people. A fall follow-up is already in the works.

"It was so exciting to go behind the clipped hedges and see that there are all these people with bee hives and chicken coops and vegetable gardens," said Wemberger a landscape designer and environmental design student at Oakland's **Merritt College** — where Piedmont's water-loving yards are frequently cited as examples of what to avoid. "The gardens are great, soulful endeavors that don't have anything to do with the image of this town. It was like jumping from 1970s Piedmont to Berkeley and Oakland of today — finally."

The five homes on the tour were located along a one-mile circuit in lower Piedmont, an area that, given its smaller lots and proximity to Oakland, is most likely to be on the vanguard of landscape reform in Piedmont. Their gardens featured olives for curing, chickens for eggs, and beehives for honey. One homeowner blanketed her front yard in 95 percent native plants, which remain something of a novelty in Piedmont. "I think that those natives really intrigue people," said Wemberger "and when she said she only waters once a month there was an audible gasp in the crowd."

Another tour highlight was the home of Piedmont CONNECT co-chair **Terry Smith**. Although you can hardly tell from the front, it features one of Piedmont's most productive gardens. Twenty years ago, she tore up the front lawn and converted the yard to a drought-tolerant design also including berry bushes and a kiwi vine. More recently she added eight fruit trees and 150 square feet of raised beds to the backyard. "Lawn is a huge resource waste," she said. "It just seems a waste to put it in ornamental plants when you can put in plants that are equally lovely and can provide food."

On the opposite end of the spectrum, **Kay Kewley** and fiancé **Wayne Lyons** installed their first edible garden last June. They replaced their traditional front yard with twelve-inch raised beds situated among fruit trees and other vegetables planted directly into the earth. Even the construction was green — the fir for the beds and bricks for new walkways were salvaged from a foundation replacement project on another property. Despite the new crops' water needs a computerized drip system has helped the couple use as much as a third less water than it did with a lawn.

Kewley and Lyons planted an extensive array of fruits and vegetables — including apricot fig, apple, blueberry, lemon, swiss chard, asparagus, squash, carrots, radish, corn, and eggplant — and have found that the visibility of the garden, not to mention its surplus, has attracted plenty of attention from neighbors.

Community engagement is just what Piedmont CONNECT hopes will spread its message, especially when it comes to landscaping. The group has no specific plans to target the city's largest lots and heaviest water users, instead leaving that up to grassroots momentum. "As people see their neighbors doing things, we expect over time there will be more localized groups," said Smith. "If we do our job right, we're not going to be needed in a couple years."

Weinberger agrees, saying she's hopeful that the organization's goals will be met through the gradual dissemination of pent up energy both within Piedmont and beyond. "Some of the Bay Area's biggest movers and shakers and financers live right here," she said, "so if we can change the way they live their lives at home, hopefully we can change the way they run their businesses."

The current flurry of interest should sustain the movement for at least a year, but it's unclear what will happen if early adopters convert their yards without converting their neighbors. Families with young children in Piedmont's top-notch schools may be too busy to undertake such a project, and older residents may simply be unable. Likewise, owners of large estates with extensive lawns and ornate hedges may face challenges too steep to overcome with simple word of mouth. For most at least, organizers hope a revolution is afoot. ●

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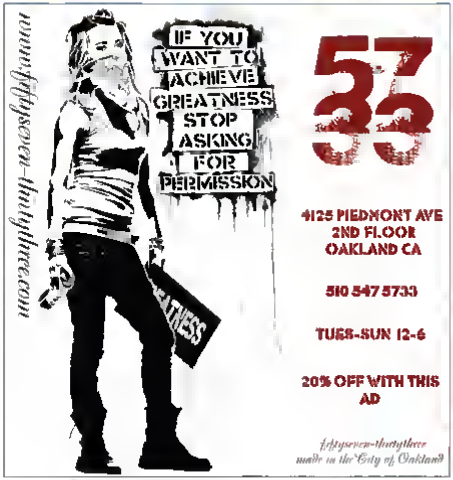
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ALAMEDA SCHOOLS FACE GRIM FUTURE

The once-proud school district makes deep cuts and prepares to close campuses after the defeat of the Measure E parcel tax.

By Michelle Ellson

Just days after suffering a razor-thin defeat at the polls, Alameda schools Superintendent **Kirsten Vital** said she was struggling to reconcile the loss of **Measure E** with the commanding major tv it received at the ballot box. The parcel tax measure garnered 65.6 percent of the vote, but t fell just short of the two-thirds majority needed to pass. tt was blocked by a small minority of the electorate — just over 34 percent of Alameda voters.

The heartbreaking loss also has already resulted in draconian cuts to the once-envied school district. Measure F would have doubled the $7 million that the district receives annually from existing parcel taxes. But because it lost, this school year will be one week shorter, and teachers will lose most of the paid time they had to prepare for students' return on August 30. And that's on top of class sizes that were already slated to swell next year — regardless of whether the tax won or lost at the polls.

This fall, middle and high school students also will have fewer counselors to guide them on their course and college decisions, while Advanced Placement courses for high school students will dwindle as part of the $7.2 million in cuts the school board approved to balance its budget for next year. The district also will have less money for textbooks, teacher training, special education services, and adult education courses.

And Vital and her staff have begun the grim task of planning for the closure, potentially, of as many as six of the district's schools in order to manage millions of dollars more in cuts in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013, when **Alameda Unified**'s existing parcel taxes expire. "This is not where we want to be as a district. The state of California has put us in this place," Vital told the board late last month. "We do not want to make these cuts."

The school board decided in March to put the Measure E parcel tax on the ballot in an effort to blunt the effect of state budget cuts that were more than $7 million this past year. Measure E would have replaced the district's existing taxes, **Measures A and H**, with a single tax that would have cost homeowners twice as much as they currently pay.

But now district leadership is anticipating that the school board will need to slash an additional $11.4 million in the 2012-2013 school year, when A and H lapse. And that's not counting any new cuts Sacramento throws their way when a state budget is finally passed sometime this year.

Measure F received 14,415 of the 22,026 votes cast in the mail-only election — almost 3,000 more than said yes to the Measure H tax in 2008. But the two-thirds-vote threshold meant Measure E fell about 450 votes short of passing. Just 7,613 Alamedans voted against it — a fact that even surprised opponents. **Ed Hirshberg**, of the **Committee Against Measure E**, said after the votes were initially tallied that he thought opponents would surely score more "no" votes.

The close result also marked the end of a campaign that was nasty even by Alameda's low standards. Some proponents of the measure had threatened to boycott store owners who opposed it — even getting into verbal confrontations with workers in one shop. Opponents, meanwhile, released a video that some felt had crossed that supporters of the measure were racist.

But all the charges and countercharges — along with arguments that the tax was unfair to business and commercial property owners who would be paying up to fourteen times more per parcel than homeowners — seemed to have little impact on voters, instead, critics of the measure wrote local newspapers and on blogs that they were tired of being asked to reach into their pockets once again to support the schools. Others said they simply couldn't afford to pay another $350 a year. "It's call for more than $450 in new taxes was far over the top, Alameda isn't Piedmont," one supporter wrote in a piece published July 2 in the *Alameda Journal*.

Others, meanwhile, said they were unconvinced the extra money would do anything to improve Alameda schools. They said they thought the district could make additional cuts without harming students. "Alameda schools have been producing very average

> Campaign organizers and district leaders are already making plans to put another tax on the ballot. Olaes said she and other parents are ready to work on getting a new tax passed.

level students for many years now. Even back when they had a full budget. Adding more money will not solve the problem of declining public education quality in CA," one commenter wrote on a local news site.

Campaign organizers and district leaders apparently disagree, however. They are already making plans to put another parcel tax on the ballot. **Sarah Olaes**, volunteer coordinator for APLUS, the committee that campaigned for Measure E, told the school board on June 29 that she and other parents were ready to work toward getting a new tax passed.

Later that night, school board Vice President **Mike McMahon** asked his fellow trustees to direct Vital and her staff to look into putting a new tax on the ballot in March 2011, specifically to avoid school closures. "The fact of the matter is, it is very clear this community wants to continue to support these schools. I'll go down on that sword, because this is what I want to continue to fight for," McMahon said before gaining the unanimous approval of his dais-mates to move forward on a new tax. "The integrity of this community is based on our ability to walk our kids to school — not ship them to factories."

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CITY OF OAKLAND: POT FARM TAXES TO NET $38 MILLION PER YEAR

Plus...Rand study predicts that legalization would lead to big price drop

By David Downs

The City of Oakland's cutting-edge approach to its medical cannabis sector is about to make national headlines again with the long awaited release of city plans for licensing large-scale marijuana grows. If the draft ordinances pass, the city stands to reap almost $38 million in taxes per year by growing one-fifth of all statewide medicinal marijuana.

The city is looking at permitting up to four large-scale grows with no limitations on each farm's size. The rules would still let patients and caregivers home-grow up to 96 square-feet, but larger grows would require a $211,000 cultivation permit to be issued starting January 1 2011.

The potential rules are scheduled to go before the city's Public Safety Committee on Tuesday July 13 and represent the first attempt by the city at regulating its numerous indoor cultivators.

The staff report from Councilman **Larry Reid** and Councilwoman **Rebecca Kaplan**'s offices says permitting large-scale grows will increase safety by undercutting the price of bootleggers, who are prone to fires and robberies. The Oakland Fire and Police departments told city staff of seven cannabis-related electrical fires in 2008 and 2009, though "many more cannabis-related fires have likely gone unreported." Residential electrical fires in Oakland rose from 133 in 2008 to 276 in 2009. Police tallied eight robberies, seven burglaries, and two homicides clearly linked to cultivation in the last two years. "Again, these statistics are likely to understate the extent of the problem."

"You've got people who are going around putting their own systems in place the wrong way and the fire department says there is potential for even greater fires to happen in residences," Councilman Reid told Legalization Nation.

Permittees will be subject to heavy regulation including quarterly reports, a perennial slate of audit taxes, a $5,000 application fee, and a $211,000 yearly registration fee. Potential permittees would be ranked on a points system by the planning department with bonus points for local ownership, local hiring, third-party oversight, and community benefits.

The draft rules would also up the number of local dispensaries from four to six, allow them to be near each other, allow on-site consumption, mandate THC testing, track how much dispensaries get from city grows, and increase annual fees from $30,000 to $60,000.

The city says increasing the amount of dispensaries prevents market domination by any particular one. That explanation would seem to contradict permitting just four large-scale grows where the city is essentially picking a winner — a fact that has some local dispensaries grumbling.

The City of Oakland's four dispensaries made $28 million in gross sales in 2009, and dispensary sales are up 40 percent from 2008. Locally, they dispensed 6,000 pounds of cannabis last year, which required 45,000 square-feet of growing space. The state as a whole consumes an estimated 175 tons of medical cannabis per year, which requires 1.75 million square-feet of growing space. Oakland assumes it can grow 20 percent of the state's supply on a comb ned 350,000 square-feet, netting the city almost $38 million annually.

Rand Study Predicts Price Drop

The cost of high-grade cannabis could drop to around $70 per ounce from $350 if California legalizes over-21 possession and consumption of the plant, a leading think tank disclosed last week. "Altered State? Assessing How Marijuana Legalization in California Could Influence Marijuana Consumption and Public Budgets" by the **Rand Corporation** finds that most of today's pot users are actually risks to growers, distributors, and sellers who face arrest and jail time. Lifting that risk, along with automation and economies of scale would cause about an 80-percent drop in the price of sensimilla and put billions of dollars back in the pockets of California consumers. The study could not say what would happen to rates of consumption with certainty, but use could double from 7 to 14 percent of the adult population.

"The prices price will go down, we're very clear about that," said **Beau Kilmer**, the study's lead author and a policy researcher at RAND. "Where we're less certain is about what happens with consumption."

Rand also found that California could make dramatically more or less than an estimated $1.4 billion per year taxing cannabis at $50 an ounce, depending not only on taxes collected but also tourism and possible exports. Enforcing the state's pot laws costs Californians about $300 million a year, the study found. The emergency room costs of increased usage represent a tiny fraction of projected revenue, Rand found.

Seeds & Stems

Support for **Prop 19** slipped to 44 percent versus 48 percent against, a **Field Poll** concluded Friday just as three US Congresspeople from California said they endorsed the initiative. ... The White House disclosed last week that pills are drawing more new users than pot. Seven of the top ten drugs abused by 12th graders are prescription drugs like **OxyContin**. The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** recently reported that prescription and over-the-counter drugs were responsible for the 25 percent increase in drug-related emergency department visits between 2004 and 2008. Since 1999 deaths from drug use have more than doubled surpassing homicides, suicides, and gunshot wounds as causes of death. This increase in drug overdose death rates is largely because of prescription opioid painkillers, the White House said. ●

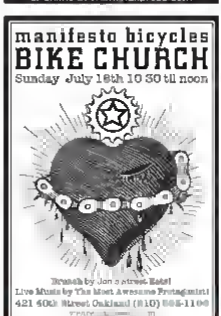
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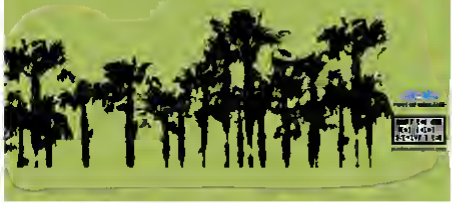


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BEST HOMEGROWN INTERNET PHENOMENON

Pandora

Pandora.com

Broadcast music radio may be dying, but personalized Internet streams are just getting started, and Oakland's Pandora.com has invented one of the most humanistic playlist generators on the market. While on-demand services allow you to program sequences (or follow those of other professional and lay programmers), Pandora generates playlists based on a cross-product of your taste and an innovative analysis of genome-like music fundamentals that include harmony, rhythm, and instrumentation. Do you like basic rock songs in a major key with electric rhythm guitars, prominent organ, and a vocal-centric aesthetic? Might we recommend The Kingsmen's cover of "Shake a Tail Feather"? Using Pandora is simple. Specify a favorite song or group, start listening to your personalized stream, and thumbs-up or -down to refine Pandora's picks. You can stream your channel through your computer, smartphone, iPad, or home stereo device for free for forty hours each month. Paid upgrades remove the monthly cap and in-stream advertising, so you can enjoy the reggae feel, antiphony, extensive vamping, vocal harmony, and minor key of "Funky Kingston" without limit or interruption.

BEST LIVE MUSIC IN A MUSEUM

L@TE Series

Berkeley Art Museum, 2626 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, 510-642-0808, BAMPFA.Berkeley.edu

One does not often get the sense that a museum is tapped in to vital underground culture, but the Berkeley Art Museum has proven itself with L@TE, a series of Friday-night performances showcasing some of the Bay's best local music. The five-floor cement reverb chamber that serves as the galleries is a wonderful resonate space for artists to fill with sound — like Ellen Fullman using the entire building as a resonator for the overtone drones of her fifty-foot Long String Instrument, or Loachfillet sending deep blips of tape machine feedback bouncing off the walls. Shows have featured Bay Area musical pioneers like Terry Riley and the Residents, as well as more recent local artists like Sic Alps and Lats Tapes. Admission is only $5, and you can wander through the exhibits while getting new spatial perspectives on the sound. Upcoming performances feature Grouper, Gamelan Sekar Jaya, and Xiu Xiu's Jamie Stewart.

BEST KARAOKE EXPERIENCE

The Mel-O-Dee Cocktail Lounge

249 El Cerrito Plaza, El Cerrito, 510-526-2131, MelODeeLounge.com

The Mel-O-Dee may not look like much, tucked between a deli and a tae kwon do studio on a quiet side-strip of El Cerrito Plaza, its location since 1969 (a previous incarnation

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existed a couple decades earlier in neighboring Albany), but come Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights, the karaoke starts banging and the joint comes to life. A diverse crowd of hipsters, students, bar regulars, and karaoke-scene karaoke fans guzzle sangria well drinks, crowd their faux-tiki tables, and get down on the small dimly-lit dance floor. "You might have a 21-year-old singing Lady Gaga, then next up, a 70-year-old doing Frank Sinatra," says affable manager Ralph Zaragoza. "But everybody gets everybody else and everybody dances." Zaragoza's specially concocted "Ghetto Kamikaze" — featuring berry vodka and five other mystery ingredients — is a particular hit and helps fuel the wang-dang-doodle. But, with the laser lighting, fog machine, and — wait for it — red velvet wallpaper, one need not imbibe to subscribe to the Mel-O-Dee magic.

BEST TRIBUTE BAND

Total B.S.

MySpace.com/totalBSus

Forget everything you think you know about Bob Seger. That was the lesson learned at the Uptown Nightclub on a recent Art Murmur evening — a free show brings everyone out, especially if they're roaming the streets of Oakland anyhow and no one cares who's playing so long as the bartenders are quick. But on this night the crowd was in for something special: Total B.S. (including members of Drunk Horse, Howlin Rain, East Bay Grease, and others, thus Bob Seger cover band has three big factors on its side: the 21st-century population's ignorance of Seger's extensive, expansive catalog, a deep love, respect, and understanding of said catalog, and Jason fucking Morgan (former Harold Ray Lachish in Concert and Drunk Horse frontman, possibly the hardest working man in Bay Area rock 'n' roll. On the night in question, the five-year-old band took the audience completely by surprise. Murmurs of "Was Bob Seger this good in concert?" and "I guess I like Bob Seger" reverberated through the crowd between high-fives, dance moves, and the drunken holding up of cell phones. Total B.S. strikes just the right balance between total nerd and totally darked-out funktician.

BEST REASON TO REMEMBER HYPHY

Mistah F.A.B.

MySpace.com/mistahfab

Hyperactive, life-celebrating hyphy rap music summered in the East Bay since the early Nineties, when rappers like Keak Da Sneak put a name to the party culture engendered by Oakland. The combination of rap with the hit drug of the time, Ecstacy, produced a speedy, narcotic genre with waves of bass designed to go all night and be played loudly while cruising. Yet three years after hyphy failed to catch all of mainland and reformat rap, Oakland's Mistah F.A.B. is still the shit. He repped the Bay hard at Austin's South By Southwest in March and his year released *Prince of the Coast (Town Princesse)* and mixtape "The Realest Shit I Never Wrote Part 3 (Hosted by DJ Ill Will & DJ Rockstar)," plus made numerous guest appearances. Hyphy may be greeted with a snort by many rap aesthetes, but sideshow culture persists across the Bay. Hails all in the Prince.



BEST INDIE IN LOCAL LABEL

Absolutely Kosher Records

1901 Powell St. Ste. H Emeryville

AbsolutelyKosher.com

Absolutely Kosher Records reps weird tuny arty bands from around the country out of an office in the shadows of Emeryville's cultural leviathan Pixar. The fiercely independent perpetually scrappy label was founded in 1998 by Cory Brown in San Francisco, then moved to Berkeley in 2002, then to Emeryville in 06. Its two-weirdo roster includes favorites like Brooklyn's chamber-pop singer songwriter Chris Garneau and Xin Xin the spastic, riveting indie-rock act originally from San Jose. A spawn of singer-songwriter Jamie Stewart who started it in 2000. Check out 2010's *Dear God I Hate Myself* from The Wrens to Frog Eyes and Little Teeth (who play July 24 at Great American Music Hall with Sleepytime Gorilla Museum). Absolutely Kosher is legit. Download its free 2010 sampler *I Used To Be Goth* from its web site.

BEST UP-AND-COMING HOMEGROWN TALENT

Colin Tilley

Berkeley native Colin Tilley became a professional music video director when he was barely old enough to drink...and now at 23 he's successful a portfolio so impressive as any industry vet. Though Tilley now spends most of his time in LA, his story is homegrown through and through. A veteran of Berkeley High's video-production program, he got his start directing videos for local acts like the Cataracs and Beedo Weedo. His dreamy, narrative-focused videos caught the eye of Taj, another East Bay druggie who's now making it big. Before long, Tilley found himself directing videos for the likes of Chris Brown and Justin Bieber. "It's pretty amazing," he said. "And it's gotta better every day."

BEST BLOG ABOUT EAST BAY ROCKS

Oakland Geology

OaklandGeology.wordpress.com

Geo-geek Andrew Alden explores the craggy crannies of Oakland that are invisible to most of us. You might think a blog about rocks would make for some pretty yawn-inducing reading, but Alden succinctly describes headscarps weeks, and serpentinite with an obvious pos

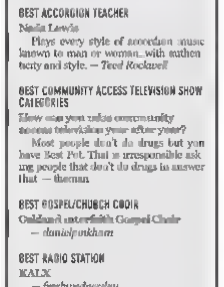
sion for his chosen field. At times the narrative almost resembles poetry, as when he describes a brown mudstone excavation on Skyline Boulevard: "The dark layer is as creamy as chocolate between the teeth. As I raked there, the rattle of falling pebbles was nearly constant. That had some unlucky soul... the Montclair hills is building a deep-soil garage atop this shaky foundation. Those who enjoy a daily dose of panic (or reality, depending on your perspective) should peruse the "Oakland hazards" and "flayward fault" categories. Alden's notes on active mine drainage, landslides, forest fires, and the impending Big One make for some hair-raising reading about the Bay Area's shaky state.

BEST REPERTORY MOVIE HOUSE

Niles Essanay Silent Film Museum

37417 NRm Blvd., Fremont 510-494-1411
NilesFilmMuseum.org

Repertory movie houses may be all but extinct, but the East Bay can count itself lucky for the one that still stands — the fabulous Niles Essanay Film Museum, located in the sun-baked Fremont neighborhood of Niles. The cozy museum/theater occupies the site of an old neighborhood theater from the early 1900s and is both a living monument to the birth of the movies and a still working theater where "old movie" is always a compliment. Every Saturday, the museum's amiable staff of movie geeks conducts hard but fascinating tours of its historic nooks and crannies, including the original tunnel projection booth. Later that evening, you can join East Bay silent-film fans for screenings of silent-era classics, many of them great rarities. Many of these films were actually shot around Niles by the Essanay Company, which was located right next door (five of them starred Charlie Chaplin). The screenings are always full with young and old alike and feel more like a community gathering than just another night out at the boring old multiplex. The museum also hosts the Broncho Billy Film Festival every spring. June.



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1200 7th St. Oakland 510-444-0919.

TheCrucible.org

Sure, jewelry places teach clay-sculpting, jewelry-making, and even woodworking. But where else can you learn fire-eating, blacksmithing, and stone-carving? Not to mention a youth workshop on how to create that favorite East Bay original: the Hyphy bike? That's right. At the Crucible, kids learn how to use welding and acetylene torches to transform their daddy-daddy old bikes into pimped-out high-fashion cruisers. Founded in Berkeley in 1999, the Crucible now occupies a massive West Oakland warehouse where it offers an eclectic range of classes in the fine and industrial arts. While its wildly popular annual Fire Arts Festival — an incendiary orgy of blazing performance, sculpture, and interactive installations — is taking 2010 off, look for the celebration to return next summer. Until then, a fire cabaret and fire opera will have to suffice on special events augmenting the usual unusual assortment of classes. To learn more about this homegrown, only-in-the-East-Bay institution, join one of the Crucible's free tours, which happen every Tuesday and Thursday evening.

BEST HOMEGROWN GIDDY PLEASURE

10 @ 10

KFOG 104.5 FM, KFOG.com

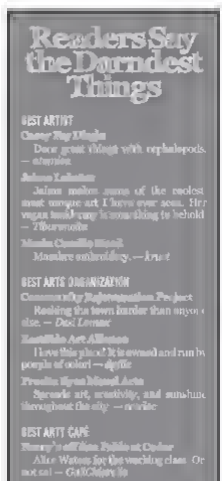
Bay Area music lovers are blessed with an embarrassment of noncommercial radio riches. KALX, KUSF, and KFJC provide the fresh, the local, the cutting-edge, and the way out there. KPFA and KPIG bring the roots and world. At any time on any day, the music-curious can be surprised a half-dozen times over by turning the dial. But you know what? Sometimes there's such a thing as too much surprise; sometimes things get a little, well, *random*. That's why 10 @ 10 is such a treat. "Ten great songs from one great year," every weekday at 10 a.m. and p.m., plus more than nets Saturday mornings 11 Arcadian is no AOR stooge — her playlists reflect legit crate-digging skills. A 1972 set doesn't mean "Brandy and" American Pie" — it means rare tracks by Pink Floyd and T. Rex. "Perfect Day" by Lou Reed and snippets from *Maude* and *The Godfather*. 1980 isn't about "Another One Bites the Dust" or "Funkytown"; it's about the Soft Boys' Spangsheen's Cadillac Ranch" and Tom Snyder facing off with John Lydon on TV. In other words: 10 @ 10 is in my radio time capsule, serving up surprise in bite-size portions.

BEST POP UP DANCE PARTY

International Freakout A Go-Go

MySpace.com/InternationalFists

Sure, Special Lord & Mark Ghrigus, Bobby Ganush, Brark Attrix, and their DJ cohorts regularly appear behind the decks of Club International at the Knockout in San Francisco, and at various international dance nights and semi parties at other SF clubs and bars. But if you're going to shake, your namecast to everything that 1960s and 1970s (and beyond) Earth had to offer the dance floor, it's far better to dose in random party spaces Oakland-style. As they put it: It's "not your dad's world music" — It's French surf rock, Senthirast Asian funk, South American psychedelia, Middle Eastern disco, Euro-go-go and a million other hip-shaking strains your booty never dreamed existed. And it's just all the more easy to forget where and when you are if you can't remember the name of the joint in the first place right? The music is nonstop, the dancing is irresistible, and the accompanying visuals are truly transporting.



BEST ARTIST

Chevy Ray Dimple

Decor great things with cephalopods. — *stevebee*

Antonio Lobaskin

Salmon molten some of the coolest most complete art I have ever seen. Hey vegan lunch soup is something to behold — *Thewrenchin*

Monika Chantilly Bissell

Massive unbridled joy. — *krissi*

BEST ARTS ORGANIZATION

Community Refurbishment Project

Reusing the town harder than anyone else. — *Dan Lomax*

Roadside Art Alliance

How this place? It is owned and run by people of color! — *dgville*

Pacific Open Bilingual Arts

Sporadic art, creativity, and sunshine throughout the city. — *mwhite*

BEST ARTY CAFE

Bunny's coffee Bubble at Cypher

Alice Waters for the working class. Or not so! — *GaleGlaser76*

Revolution Cafe

As funky as West Oakland. — *mwhite*

Subcon Cafe

Tons of slam animated into a super small space ... plus the art on the walls is always inspired. — *slamdotbelle*

Westside Subcon Cafe

Old school, but good school. — *oceanwaves*

BEST BAND

Alma Deutscher

Most soulful band I've heard in a old style. — *amyo*

Cameo Crypto

Check out their last song, "Oakland Is Tight." — *anne.sherrell*

Death Slit

So underground not even y'all know about it ... yet. — *mistermeahman*

BEST DAY AREA SLANG NOMINATED AS MAINSTREAM NOMENCLATURE

"hella"

hella \hel-LAY\ adjective, adverb, noun, interjection, a lot of, same thing. Example sentence: "That concert was hella tight, yo." No one truly knows the etymology of popular Northern California slang term "hella," only that it's so East Bay there's even a defunct prog metal band from Sacramento named for the term. Of course, Hella (the band) broke up. McManus-Webster doesn't officially list the word, but any decent Urban Dictionary traces its roots to the Bay Area. Most recently a UC Davis student nominated the popular term — which suburban teens have further bastardized as the PG-13 cat ed "hecka" — to be the official signifier of numbers with 27 zeros at the end of them. "Yotta" is the currently largest prefix in the International System of Units, serving numbers with 24 zeros. Hella units could be used to compute the Sun's wattage. *New Scientist* reported this spring. Scientists in control of International Committee for Weights and Measures say they'll eagerly consider the proposal this September. But with 60,939 Facebook fans lobbying them, they better take it hella seriously.

BEST CHRONICLER OF BIG NEW THINGS

Michael Lewis

Interviewed at his Berkeley home about the Wall Street meltdown, Michael Lewis told *60 Minutes* Steve Kroft that it was happening because "cap tal ism was almost destroyed by the capitalists." Interviewed last year by an MSNBC reporter about the seemingly doomed publishing industry, Lewis declared, "I get paid more for each word now than I've ever been paid. So right now it's not affecting me. Sporting degrees from Princeton and the London School of Economics, Lewis has a knack for turning out re mpelling, convincing, sharply intelligent books whose preternaturally exquisite timing translates them overnight into lenses through which American readers can view their own history as it happens. His national bestsellers include *Liar's Poker*, *Running Through the Wreckage on Wall Street*, *The New New Thing: A Silicon Valley Story*, and *Moneyball: The Art of Winning an Unfair Game*. His 2006 book *The Blind Side: Evolution of a Game* was made into an Academy Award–winning film. His latest is *The Big Short: Inside the Doomsday Machine*. Lewis has one finger on the pulse of society — and other fingers on pulses that the rest of us don't even yet know exist.

BEST GRAPHIC NOVELIST

Daniel Clowes

DanielClowes.com

With his landmark 2000 graphic novel *Ghost World*, Dan Clowes helped to redefine literature in our era — something not just to be read but also seen — a transformation of the mind and soul whose art took the form of words and pictures, yet was definitely for grownups. In that book as well as in 2006's *Art School Confidential* and his other works, Clowes' use for achingly authentic dialogue and his command of disparate drawing styles create narratives of unprecedented emotional honesty. His new book, *Wilson* is set mostly in Oakland — where both Clowes and its titular protagonist reside.

Wilson is the kind of guy who sits down across from you at cafe tables and asks how you're doing, what you're working on and whether you have a spouse and kids. Answer him in monosyllables and he just keeps asking. Ignore him and he cusses you out. He's not a misanthrope. Clowes insists "but rather a guy who links his fellow human beings to an impossibly high standard and can't bear to see how consistently they fail to make the grade.

BEST NOVELIST

Christi Phillips

Christi Phillips.com

What's better than settling in for a long, languorous beach read with a nice fat volume in your favorite genre? Well settling in for that beach read with a nice, fat, immaculately researched, beautifully written volume that embodies several of your favorite genres all rolled into one. Oakland author Christi Phillips masterfully combines historical romance, mystery, chick lit, and just plain lit. To research her latest novel 2009's *The Devlin Diary* — in which a 21st-century historian investigates a 17th-century female doctor with a drug problem and access to Britain's king — Phillips immersed herself in the writings of diarists such as Samuel Pepys and Robert Hooke, fascinated to learn about such supposed remedies as "powdered stag's pizzel" and "the stinking fumes of a burnt horse's hoof." *The Devlin Diary* is a sequel to 2007's *The Rossetti Letter* a wildly popular reading-group sensation in which the same 21st-century historian searches Venice for the long-lost missive with which a gorgeous 17th-century courtesan risked sparking a political coup in which she and her lover would almost surely lose their lives. Phillips' characters in both eras feel fully fleshed enough to pop life-sized straight out of the pages.

BEST EAST BAY POET

Chana Bloch

ChanaBloch.com

Berkeley poet Chana Bloch has a fourth book of poetry out, and like her award-winning *Mrs. Dumpty* the new volume, *Blood Honey* is on the road to success — most recently with a glowing review in the *Times Literary Supplement*. Jane Hirschfield has written of the poems in *Blood Honey* "They know some things about life that are hard to put into words, and for those things, they heal words, and more." After more than thirty years of teaching and directing the Creative Writing Program at Mills College, Bloch has been taking time to focus on her own writing, as well as translation of poetry, and the results look promising. In addition to *Blood Honey*, Bloch's latest translation (in collaboration with Chana Kronfeld) of

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST BLOGGER

Andrew Lavy
— *Subterranean Reading Machine*

A gentleman, an athlete, and an inspiration. — *Mitch*

Crazy in Suburbia
CrazyInSuburbia.blogspot.com.
— *Jillhamer*

Perverse
Don't follow any blogs. — *seanmurks*

Kevin Roose, Breakfast.com
The guy can write. What else need I say? — *nicolet*

BEST BURNING MAN RIPSNORT

The Crucible
They're still hot! — *Lynne Elizabeth*

The hot-tub at my place on a weekend night.
Do you want pictures, for real? — *mistermochitron*

BEST CLUB

The New Parish
Just went there for the first time this night! Pretty sweet! — *sarahmarbet*

The Bay Room
Maybe not a club, but the finest dive that feels like a club this side of the bay! — *jonathan@parish.com*

The Uptown
Dumpsters, Green Day, Germs, Frank Black, Chuck D plus amazing local bands all within the last year or so in Oakland, are you kidding me?!! — *mistermochitron*

BEST DJ, CLUB

DJ Hustler
He decides where I'm going out on the weekends! — *mangorun*

Hooligan @ Mission Lounge
Making South America more accessible for those without the funds to make it there. — *holmesman*



Best reason to remember hyphy: Mistah FA'B — Chris Duffey



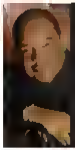
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AMEL LARRIEUX
August 26-28


ISAAC DELGADO
With special guest FREDDY COLE
Sept 10-12


LES NUBIANS
Sept 16-19


FRED HERSCH / NANCY KING
Sept 21


CHARLES LLOYD
Sept 23-26


GERI ALLEN
TRIBUTE TO ERIC DOLPHY
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Sept 28-30


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October 6-7


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With CHRISTIAN McBRIDE & BRIAN BLADE
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October 15-17


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October 18-19


AVISHAI COHEN - AURORA
October 20-21


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Solo!
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NGUYEN LE - SAIYUKI
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Israeli poet Dahlia Ravikovitch's work, *Hovering at a Low Altitude* has garnered praise from Adrienne Rich Sandra Gilbert and Alicia Ostriker among others. When she's not writing, translating, or giving readings, Bloch serves as poetry editor of Persimmon Tree (persimmontree.org) Bloch is one of the quiet stars that makes the East Bay lit scene shine so brightly- catch her if you can.

BEST PLACE TO HEAR AND READ GOOD POETRY

Poetry at the Albany Library

Second Tuesdays 7 5 p m 1247 Marin Ave. Albany 510-526-3720. Albany.Library@gmail.com

There are some hidden gems that cause deep inner conflict. We feel compelled to divulge the secret to let others in on a good thing, but at the same time, we fear that the treasure will be spoiled, overrun by crowds. A select group of poets and poetry lovers in the Albany/North Berkeley environs feels this way about a long running, under publicized monthly poetry series run by local impresario of poetry Catherine Taylor and funded by the Friends of the Albany Library. On the second Tuesday of every month in the library's comfortable Edith Stone Room a featured reader of the caliber of Robert Hass Sharon Doubiago, or Kenji Knight reads at 7 p.m. followed by a discussion session and an open mic list (with signups often pushing twenty) of generally talented poets — some regulars some newcomers or passers-through. Taylor crafts the event thoughtfully sometimes with themed nights such as Imus's fathers-and fatherhood reading in honor of Father's Day. The audience is attentive, well-read, and engaged, and does not flee after the featured reading is over during the open mic you might look up from your sonnet to see Maxine Hong Kingston smiling and nodding at your words. Really

BEST HOME GROWN CULTURAL SCENE

The Oakland Art Murmur

First Friday of the month in various locations in Oakland, OaklandArtMurmur.com

The Oakland Art Murmur has been going strong for six years now and every month it continues to grow both in attendance and in participants. 23rd Street between Telegraph and Broadway is the epicenter of a fantastic array of mixed-medium art exhibits and crafts sold by local artisans. Walk down Telegraph to 25th and you'll notice that the sidewalk has become a venue for cabaret impromptu cafes, and vegan treats. 25th Street is the new 23rd, with seven new galleries opening on the street since 21 Grand moved there seeking cheaper space. The movement has garnered international interest, and with thousands of people visiting every month, it is no wonder some of the hippest artists in the world are showing in Oakland.

BEST UNDER 21 SPOT

924 Gilman

924 Gilman St Berkeley 510-524-8180 924Gilman.org

924 Gilman has been "doing it for the kids" since way back in 1986. Now many of those kids are old enough to have kids of their own. All-ages volunteer-run and with a policy of no drugs and alcohol no racism sexism, or homophobia, Gilman has always been a safe space for kids of all ages to enjoy the local punk scene as well as hosting bands from around the country and indeed the globe. Gilman has been instrumental in the underground music scene, having given a start to such notable bands as Operation Ivy, Rancid, AFI and of course Green Day. Despite its reputation as a "punk rock mecca," Gilman remains humble and sticks to its original philosophy of encouraging all who come to take an active role, volunteer

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST EAST BAY SLANG WORD OR PHRASE

Basically

I'm tired of this word as it's used by annoying people who can't express them selves intelligently and use this word as a filler. I've them it is being used incorrectly! Basically continue to say bad only! — Leslo

Hella

Hella classic East Bay-erly phrase. You can be sure to be made fun of if you leave a fifty-mile radius. — *helanneman*

As a Berkeley native coming of age in the eighties I once tried to forbid the word hella in my vocabulary. It was hella hard. — *Dangerangel*

Hecka

Because some people find hella offensive. — *mr.schmeck*

Other side of the tunnel

West side rules! — *Tom Walton*

The Flats

As in my house in the hills was ruined by the bank and now I live in The Flats. — *ElisaA*

Yadidadeal

It means do you feel me? — *celebsmiles*

BEST GALLERY

Hatch Gallery

The founder of Lobot brings forth another asset to Oakland's art scene. — *mistermochiman*

Johnnason Projects

Oakland finally has a good amount of galleries but sadly most of them still aren't up to snuff or showing very professional work. — *mr.schmeck*

Parisoupe Cellars

You can't beat art & wine together! — *Moline Jennifer*

BEST GALLERY OPENINGS

Leslie Gallerian

Best painting of a snail I've ever seen. — *CaliforniaAnne*

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Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST HOMEGROWN CULTURAL SCENE

Jamila Woods at the Fox Theater

After — what, forty years? — her poetry just keeps getting better. — *GodChicarello*

Oakland Hills

This nomadic group sells T-shirts and baby onesies out of a cool Clark's Corner in Grand Lake Farmers' Market. Full of Oakland love, these wee-size features lots of great activities for young (and old) Oakland hipsters. — *patrick magnuson prolific*

Youth Uplift Center

Love and life for West Oakland youth — *rmbo*

BEST LOCAL ACT THAT MADE IT BIG

El Dia Vanilla

They are cute! — *balanceman*

Green Day

I cannot describe the weird thrill I get watching them take the stage at... the Tonys?! — *Lori S.*

Lyalls

I was feeling lost till I found her music — *Jamie Hirabe*

Mandrake James-Brown

Too freaky he don't—no matter his NFL stats, MoJo remains level-headed and determined to give back to his foundations. — *allthatjazzy*

or even start a band. Due to a recent rent hike, 924 Gilman is now in danger of closing, and as a truly homegrown institution needs you help now more than ever. So what are you waiting for, punk?

BEST PLACE TO PLAY BOARD GAMES

Albatross Pub

1822 San Pablo Ave Berkeley, 510-883-2673, AlbatrossPub.com

If a solid beer list and cozy antique pub setting aren't enough to get you into a bar, the Albatross pub keeps stacks of games on hand. There are classics like the deceptively simple Connect Four and Trivial Pursuit, as well as new favorites like Apples to Apples to keep you entertained and competitive. And if a chess tournament has you clamoring for more brain food, make use of Albatross's hung-your-own-food policy, and order in a pizza, bring your own assortment of stinky cheese and charcuterie or grab another bowl of the Albatross's all-you-can-eat popcorn ($1). If you're tired of sitting, pony up to the pool table or consider slogging by for the Tuesday night darts tournament ($5 buy in). Want to take the intellectual challenge up a notch? Stretch that brain with the infamous Sunday pub quiz (the only cost is humiliation at not knowing which poet first invoked the albatross).

BEST MOVIE GOING EXPERIENCE

Movie Classics at the Paramount Theatre

2025 Broadway, Oakland, 510-465-6400 ParamountTheatre.com

At a glance, the Paramount Theatre might be looking a little shabby since its neighbor the Fox Theater completed its magnificent restoration. Nevertheless, the Paramount remains an astounding Art Deco movie palace, full of ornate etched glass and carved wood panels, golden everything, and two gigantic mosaic nearties standing guard over the marquee — after all, it's been designated a historical landmark three times over. There's no better way to take it all in than by attending its Movie Classics series, where you can see films by cinematic masters like Howard Hawks and Orson Welles the way they were originally seen there, with an organist playing entree music on a four-tiered Wurlitzer, era-specific newsreel shorts providing historical and emotional context for each film, and an authentic, 1936 "Dee-O-Win" wheel of fortune sending patrons home with prizes from local businesses. For a five-spot, this bi-weekly series packs a lot of entertainment into an unforgettable setting. And if you want to dig deeper into the guts of the Paramount Theatre, a tour is offered on the first and third Saturdays of each month.

BEST CREATIVE MUSIC AND COCKTAILS

Kingman's Ivy Room

880 San Pablo Ave Albany, 510-526-5998, KingmansCocktails.com

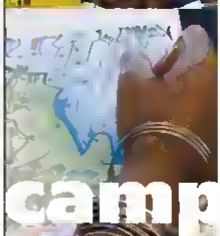
Albany's smooth, living-room-style cocktail lounge is an unlikely place to seek out underground music but most Mondays and some Tuesdays, the Ivy Room hosts free concerts of creative jazz, lo-fi rock, and improvised music. Bands like Oakland psych rockers Clipd Beaks alternate with Mills College MFAs Fike Arant Shelton, Jennifer Glenn, and Karl Kahlich, singer-lists performing right on the lounge's carpeted floor (there is no stage). Lucio Mu'egon began this musical infusion with the support of bartender Eric Leppo in July 2008. He expected his Ivy Room Improv/Experimental Hootenanny & Social Club to be short-lived. Instead, the monthly series thrived and attracted other underground music organizers to book the month's remaining Mondays. There is never a cover charge, and it's a good excuse to bring yourself into the vicinity of Zachary's Pizza. Kick back on a posh couch and enjoy the perplexity of the regulars — and yourself — as to why this is happening here.

BEST ART GALLERY PRESENTING LIVE MUSIC

21 Grand

410 25th St Oakland, 510-444-7263, 21Grand.org

21 Grand is now in its tenth year as Oakland's foremost presenter of freely improvised music. The Bay Area has the strongest free improv scene outside of Europe, and this newsommercial music simply could not survive without nonprofit art spaces like 21 Grand hosting live concerts. 21 Grand is also






Summer Programs for High School Artists

kala 2010

High School Printmaking Intensive

Grades 9–12 | July 26–30, 10:30 am–4:00 pm $375

Students will work in a professional environment as printmakers to create small-scale but high quality prints. Document their artistic process and produce completed work in a digital format. This is a fast moving week with a new project each morning and afternoon. Learn the technical aspects of printmaking including image transfer tricks, paper selection, color mixing, and ink layering, registration, and cleaning protocols. Art making workshops will be complemented by tours of Kala's professional art studios, artists and gallery alumni speakers will share insights into their careers and artistic practice. Families and friends are invited to join us at the end of the week to view a selection of student work.

Recommended for juniors and seniors wanting to build their college admissions portfolios or anyone who is serious about art making.

High School Afternoon Studio

Grades 9–12 | August 2–6, 2:30–5:00 pm $375

This studio intensive workshop presents a changing array of artistic techniques that allow High School students to explore and expand their own studio practice. Students will be exposed to a variety of media and approaches to visual thinking. Projects may include photo-journal art, gesture and line drawing, collage, accordion book making, sketchbook and music, image transfers and mapping. Each afternoon we will study works by artists such as Jake Weinrich, Maryjen O Hara, Adam Fowler, Nina Katchadourian, Brian Dettmer, William Kentridge and Fran Siegel.

Our studio process and resulting artwork will be documented in a digital portfolio and celebrated at the end of the week.

Professional Development: Access Points to Printmaking for Educators & Teaching Artists

August 2–3, 10:00 am–5:00 pm $250

Join us for a two-day printmaking workshop where you will experience monotype, relief printing, stencil art, masking techniques and more. Work on exciting process and problem solving hand-on printing techniques that will allow you to teach printmaking in any classroom.

Model lessons will be presented from multiple perspectives, demonstrating the ways in which the starting process can be guided with an existing curriculum or presented independently. Particular emphasis will be placed on energizing your own artistic practice while learning new techniques that will be accessible to your students. We will discuss resources, materials and concepts to add to your toolbox, if projects.

www.kala.org

For enrollment inquiries please contact:

Jamile Dunn Artists in Schools Program Coordinator

KALA ART INSTITUTE

TEL 510.841.7000 X203

FAX 510.841.7004

EMAIL: jamila@kala.org

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Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST LOCAL ALBUM

Unknown

The Heavenly State's *Sweet Sour Misdemeanor*

Unknown

And You Can Spin It on the Jukebox at M'GOY'S! — *sandiegoliving*

BEST LOCAL AUTHOR

Stephen Elliott

Everyone should read *War by Candlelight* and *Last City Radio*. — *ok*

Sasha Anawalt

It is written indie fiction. Leaves it in pieces all over the East Bay — *Californian*, *inc*

Aaron Gilbreath

The man knows his way around a sentence. *sanfrancisco*

BEST LOCAL BOOK

Austin Cory Novella Carpenter

Inspired my wife to start her blog. *Wild*

Unknown

CRACK involves the murder of a shaman, the young woman and the Oakland police's determination to place a member of the Black Panther party at the heart of their sex, drugs, and the search for love early seventies East Bay scene. — *Ishervell*

Unknown

I think am better writer of non-fiction than Michael Lewis? — *Stephen Buel*

Unknown

I finally know that all the mythical creatures really exist — *tammy*

BEST LOCAL ERM

Unknown and indigenous Volume

Series of Prep 8 rallies in Oakland. — *Ruthi*

the East Bay outpost of the Brutal Sound Effects series (one of the Bay Area's premier presenters of noise and electronic music) and it is the most frequent venue partner of Chris Sandvoich, a collective that organizes all-ages concerts with a focus on underground rock. It's the sort of venue that often features solo performers...but has presented groups as large as a sixty-musician orchestra performing the music of Anthony Braxton in honor of the composer's sixtieth birthday. At a typical show the audience is in danger of being outnumbered by the musicians onstage, though on the rare occasion that a Semi Youth side-project plays, the masses cannot be contained within the former warehouse's walls and spill out into the street. With such diversity of cutting edge culture it's a fine reason to HART over from SF.

BEST COOPERATIVE NEW MUSIC ORCHESTRA

Oakland Active Orchestra

ActiveMusic.wordpress.com

Operative now for nearly a year, the Oakland Active Orchestra is a fascinating experiment in cultivating a large group that freely improvises with far more than the standard workable number of people, plays monthly gigs for donations only, and somehow keeps it all going. It's a testament to the East Bay's incredibly strong creative music scene that such a group is possible. And the orchestra's May concert held at the Uptown nightclub it played big-band orchestrations of robotic mid-tune pieces composed by the Oakland duo Mymyr (who regularly serve as the orchestra's string section), an upbeat tune by trumpeter Tom Djll with plenty of free-jazz solos passed around, and two large-group free improvisations. Just as half the interest in improvised music lies in seeing the musicians grapple with the circumstances and environment of the performance, the Oakland Active Orchestra's struggle against practicality leads fascinating depth to its music.

BEST TAPE LOOP MANIPULATOR

Loachfillet

WormPerit.blogspot.com

Enshrouded in his kitschy vampire cape, Oakland's Loachfillet stirs terrifying tape loops, analog oscillators, and defective circuits into his cauldron of murky, groaning noise. His sounds reflect the influence of old horror and sci-fi movies, as does his macabre visual presentation, with a bloody, severed hand wiggling its fingers amid his gear. While most of his music deals with sustained textures and atmospheres, most albums feature one or two more straightforward grooves. "Hell" from 2009's *Electric Fraud Soldier Solution*, is a psychedelic krautt-rock freakout with delayed guitar soloing and dissonant organ chords oozing over a driving bass pulse —"a melted brain bake in the studio." On 7*inf-immorlik Ve Olüm*, his new collection of meditations on dissatisfaction and death (both the richness of his electronic sounds and the sense of space created with his stereo effect processing reach new levels of technical mastery and unique expression. Loachfillet characterizes his recorded work as a distillation of playful experimentation in the studio; experiencing a live performance fills in the cracks between those chosen moments with the vitality of discovery and the anxiety of failure.



Best public art innovation. Prep Art. "The Guardian." by Fred Fierstein. Chris Duffey

BEST AFTHERETICAL PERFORMANCE ARTIST

Julie Caffey

AlphabetProject.wordpress.com

The alphabet. He hum. No innovation for thousands of years, at least, that is, until local-gal turned performance-artist Julie Caffey's *Alpha Brick* solo monologue hit the Bay Area last November at the ODC Theater in San Francisco. In the piece Caffey gives voice to characters who relate their alternatively truculent and poignant memories — in alphabetical order. Tall curvy and honey-haired, Caffey exudes a gritty charisma that through with playfulness. And *Alpha Brick* isn't her only ruminations on the 26 letters that make English hum: she's also written and performed a show called *Alphabet-Ohh* and another titled *Alphabet Rx port* (as well as a few of other pieces, too). A founding member of Moving Stories Performance Ensemble, Caffey also performs with InterPlay's Wright Performances Ensemble. In a culture hurtling more and more toward the visual, away from language, it's comforting to know people like Caffey are guarding the abecedarian flame.

BEST STREET CHALK ARTIST

Mark Wagner

Hearts and Bones Studio HeartsandBones.com

Chalk is a humble medium, one most of us associate with long afternoons in school. But in the hands of Mark Wagner, an Alameda based artist, it becomes the stuff of legend. In 2008's under auspices of his nonprofit Drawing on Earth he guided 5,679 Alameda children in drawing a chalk pavement art project that measured 90,000 square feet; the project won entry in the 2010 Guinness Book of World Records. And for many years, he's rocked the Youth in Arts fundraiser Italian Street Painting Festival with his chalk creations and 3D anamorphic street painting. Wagner's images are mythic, mysterious: powerful — a white stove cradled in weather-worn hands, a winged goddess holding a blood-red shield, the dark silhouette of an eagle emerging from a man's calm face. Wagner works not only in chalk but also in the film industry, as a concept artist and as an illustrator-graphic designer and educator. His motto? "Re-enchant the world through art" — one chalk square at a time.

BEST SUMMER OUTDOOR MOVIE NIGHT

Danville Moonlight Movies

Town Green, 420 Front St., Danville 925-314-3400

Okay, the marine layer is nice, but when it's time to really experience summer drive out to Danville for an outdoor movie night — most likely the air temperature will hover at a balmy 80 degrees. Family-friendly films are screened every other weekend June through August on

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THE FESTIVAL IN THE BAY

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Danville's lovely Town Green. Look for *Babe, Junanji* and *Matilda* over the next few weeks. Moviegoers bring their own blankets, snacks and lawn chairs; the show starts at 8:30 p.m. It doesn't hurt that Danville has a long history of being a "livin' is easy" kind of place. Ray Mawby Indians sculpted next to its creeks and campsites on Mount Diablo in the summer until the town was overrun by gold-seekers in the mid-1850s. A summer night outside — with crickets — in small-town California? Ah. It nothing like it.

BEST PLACE TO GET THE SHAKES

Livermore Shakespeare Festival

4590 Tesla Rd., Livermore 925-443-2273
LivermoreShakes.org

It's a shame that William Shakespeare so often finds his way to classrooms and stuffy auditoriums where he's dissected and lifelessly regurgitated. The Elizabethan tongue should flow unbridled through the air and hug of that air happens to be in a vineyard on a summer night, who's to argue? In its tenth year this year, the festival at the Concannon Vineyard features two plays that celebrate the perils of love. The unconstrolled passion of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (through August 7) fits nicely with the venue's hot and humid summer. While the Montague and Capulet families struggle with sew love. *The Real Thing* (through July 31) by Tom Stoppard takes a stab at lasting love. The Tony Award winning play within a play examines the role loyalty, betrayal, and cuckolds serve in keeping a couple together. With a pair of blankets and glasses of wine, you can enjoy the hard it is tosses — full of life, free of homework.

BEST FACE LIFT

Oakland Museum of California

1000 Oak St., Oakland, 510-238-2200.
MuseumCA.org

Usually we leave face-lifts to our Southern California friends, but the re-opening of the Oakland Museum of California is one upgrade that we can get behind. After two years and close to $66 million of work, the museum reopened in May with the addition of more than 4,500 square feet of gallery space and a redesigned interactive approach. The Gallery of California History features some 2,500 artifacts that focus on the people places, and stories unique to the Golden State and opportunities for visitors to add their mark to California's legacy. Many of the large statues from the Gallery of California Art now reside outside to create room for a rotating lineup of local art that reflects civic and cultural awareness. One example, *Passo: 25 Years of Artivism* (July 31-January 9, 2011) reflects the large-scale traveling exhibits the museum can now accommodate. In addition, the face-lift isn't over. In 2012, the Gallery of Natural Sciences will open with a focus on California's habitats and the threats that they face.

BEST POLITICAL ARTIST COLLECTIVE

Taller Tupac Amaru

510-845-9267 TallerTupacAmaru.com

Artists Favianna Rodriguez, Jesus Barraza, and Melanie Cervantes carry on the traditions of Latin screenprinters such as Rupert Garcia and Malaquias Montoya with their politically charged posters, which are often distributed for free during marches and demonstrations. The three can be found making screen-printed political posters in Rodriguez's small backyard studio in Oakland. Their provocative and lively prints are also distributed to many arts and grassroots organizations, with themes such as anti-war, police brutality, and immigration. One of their latest commissions was a poster for the US Social Forum that took place recently in Detroit, Michigan, the ultimate gathering for social-justice activists and leftists. The artists consider themselves activist artists (like Posada and Cervantes made posters immediately after the Oscar Grant shooting). They aren't ashamed to call what they make artistic propaganda — "propaganda for the people." Other times they cover new globalization gentrification women's rights, and youth activism. Their collective is named after Inca warrior Tupac Amaru who fought Spanish colonists. they consider themselves warrior artists who bring art to the masses, demonstrating that art can be accessible and doesn't have to cost a lot of money.

BEST PLAY

God's Ear by Shotgun Players

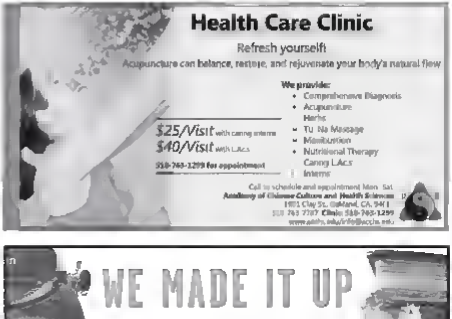
1901 Ashby Ave. Berkeley, 510-841-6500
ShotgunPlayers.org

Absurdist chorus-line nombers and expressionistic movement have become Erike Chong Shuch's stock in trade. Based in San Francisco, she's one of the few choreographers who can traffic in the rawest emotional terms but never waste a single body movement. She proved as much in last year's *Sunday Will Come* — which swapped metaphors for love and death — and in the fight scenes for Shotgun Players' *Three Penny Opera*. In May she returned to Shotgun to premiere *God's Ear*, her new collaboration with New York playwright Jenny Schwartz. Starring Shotgun regulars Beth Wilmurt (as a bereaved wife) and Zehra Berkman (a barroom floozy) it's a weird tangled elliptical story about a husband and wife whose marriage unravels after the death of their son. The husband (Ryan O'Donnell) boards a flight to a strange parallel universe; the wife numbs herself by obsessing over banalities. Lisa Clark's ethereal, snowy set contributed to the success of this production, but it was really the rhythmic tautness of movement and dialogue that made *God's Ear* the best local play of the past year.

BEST ACTOR

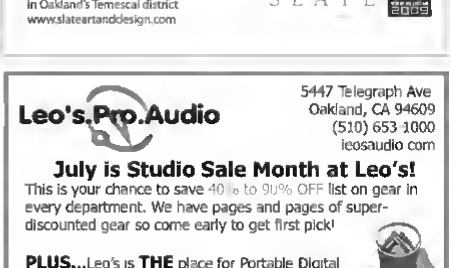
Gabriel Marin

On alternate occasions Gabriel Marin pretends to be excessively neurotic excessively hedonistic, excessively wounded, or excessively vulnerable. But he always excessive. Marin has the kind of easily mutable features that make emotions legible on his face. In last year's fabulous comedy *Jack Goes Boating* (which closed the 2008-2009 season at Aurora Theatre) he played one-half of an eccentric husband-wife duo. As the husband Clyde Marin was funny and temperamental with a real short fuse. He worked for a limo service by day and took a side gig teaching tai chi swan lessons — for which he acted more like an army drill sergeant. Center-

















Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST MUSICIAN

Calvin Leigh Rasmussen

This girl plays the piano somewhere at virtually every BART Station I've been to. She's a classic hippie chick, has completely rockin' tunes, some of which she has written herself, and some of which she's learned as traditional or modern traditional tunes. She's got out one CD titled *Thyme*. She should be the next Jeanna Newsom. A total sweetheart here! — *Calgirlmadame*

Golden Grass

Reggae Wave, The Allman Leaf Dr Dog, The Heavenly Sixties, Spoon, Gold on Ground, The Morning Benders, Jet Tenderness, Part Of Us ... how many projects can this guy get involved in?! — *mistermeshmar*

That guy near downtown BART with the harmonica

He's pretty cool — *lylmbo*

BEST PLACE TO DANCE

Ale Lounge

They turn their AC on though ... lol — *anthrogurl*

Kentucky Dance at Rivoli's Roller rink

No talking on the dance floor, just rich disco grooves and from-the-heart crooning — *storm*

Ondo

Bad night in the bodyguard! — *wb*

The Uptown

Hella Gay Dance Party! — *fuseplant*

BEST PUFF

Joyce Lee

Joyce Lee is an angel in disguise, an FBI agent on the hunt for lost Hearts and Souls. She says what you're thinking with no fear. Joyce comes to kick ass and take names. She is a champion. — *fatsassy*

Shanglen Powell

Hotwaterwarmbowl.org. — *John Quinn*

Rep's production of *A Number* had him playing sons cloned from the same petri dish. The role required Marin to straddle that fine line between nature and nurture, showing how three distinct personalities could inhabit the same body. Playing opposite veteran actor James Carpenter Marin shifted characters with ease.

BEST KIDS' MUSICIAN

Gary Lapow

GaryLapow.com

Decades ago Gary Lapow toured the country as a member of the Freedom Singers — the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee's musical mouthpieces — promoting peace and equal rights. Today the Berkeley-based Lapow continues to perform music with a message, though his focus has shifted to things like nurturing too self-esteem and respect. It's propaganda for how to have fun and trust other people with kindness," Lapow says of his catchy, upbeat children's songs. Nine albums, a Disney Channel concert, and countless live performances have established Lapow universally as a first rate kids' entertainer — he periodically travels the country as a Wolf Trap Institute Master Artist, touring educators how to combine learning and the arts. But that doesn't mean the East Bay's gotten left out of the picture. Lapow performs a variety of shows centered on diversity literacy, and other positive themes at schools, libraries, and community centers throughout Northern California. Lapow's infectious energy and showmanship (he occasionally ditches his guitar to strum a rubber chicken) are a hit with kids and teachers alike.

BEST FLEA MARKET DRUM CIRCLE

Berkeley Flea Market

1337 Ashby Ave Berkeley, 510-644-2746, BerkeleyFleaMarket.com

Used records. Secondhand clothing. Homemade soap. Possibly-fenced items. The weekend flea market in the Ashby BART station's western parking lot carries pretty much the typical swap-meet fare. But what sets Berkeley Flea apart? A loyal cadre of hard-core drummers and percussionists of all races and ages who gather every Saturday and Sunday morning to pound out the bazaar's syncopated (and sometimes just plain discombobulated) soundtrack. Cowbells, timbales, congas, soda bottles, nearby trashcans, and pretty much any other beatable objects are fair game at this morning-to-night rhythm jam which is open to anyone wanting to join. The drum circle is said to have originated some forty years ago at UC Berkeley's lower Sproul Plaza before gradually migrating south to Ashby BART over the last decade or two. Today it consistently lures curious onlookers who drift from their perusals of rag champs and chewing sticks to first gawk, then tap a foot, then, on occasion, burst into full-blown dance mode. How Berkeley can you be? Not much more than this.

BEST NEW BAND WITH AN OLD SOUND

The Bitter Honeys

Facebook.com/pages/the-bitter-honeys/115217965166284

Don't let the dude guitarist in the band's Facebook profile picture fool you. While Ryan Beebe (late of the Dead Heroes and German Social Aid and Pleasure Club) and drummer Mouse are solid and true, The Bitter Honeys are all about the frontladies, Cris Armijo (Outline Kit) Sara Gambuna Bellamp (Gamelan Sekar Jaya) and Erica Johnson (Dead Hen Sons). Though their big hair, matching outfits (handmade by Armijo, aka Cristalette) dulcet harmonies, and the bittersweet nature of their songs are decidedly girl-group retro the Honeys have just enough modern touches to escape the novelty band trap. Tiny Gambina-Bellamp straps a gamelan on his bass over her glitzy dresses, and many of the band's songs nale before a 21st century self-awareness, making the connecting lines between the Shangri-Las and Sleater-Kinney far more apparent. The handful of obscure but tastefully appropriate covers are nearly in



Best tape loop manipulator: Loachlight

Chris Duffey

distinguishable from the originals, proving that this band knows its musical history just as well as it knows how to make the medicine of heartbreak go down sweet and easy.

BEST PUBLIC ART INNOVATION

Plop Art: "The Guardian," by Fred Fierstein

Foot of University Avenue, Berkeley

Back in the mid-Eighties, when the DIY spirit was young(er), a sculptural installation made quite a splash at the foot of the Berkeley pier and in the Bay Area art scene. Or perhaps in the *methodology* of the Bay Area art scene. When Fred Fierstein deposited "The Guardian," a sixteen-foot-tall, massive cement-and-steel sculpture based on a medieval Mongolian lucky charm, at its current (and, let's face it, permanent) marina location, the city officials went up in arms. But the fierce archer — and the Berkeley voters — won the day, and the term Plop Art was born. As you stand at the waterfront contemplating the striking piece, you might consider how times have changed. The current sculpture planned for nearby Cesar Chavez Park, a collaborative piece by Jeffrey Reed and Jennifer Madden, has been sealed down after the Golden Gate Audubon Society complained that its height might provide a perch for raptors. Thus endangering the marina's protected burrowing owl population. The newly approved version is under construction now and will provide a barrier to shield the owls. Even in the world of art, EIR beats DIY in this day and age.

BEST LOCAL ACT THAT MADE IT BIG

Green Day

GreenDay.com

In 1994, the release of *Dookie* kicked off the band's mainstream success, but before the glitz and glamour, Green Day was an East Bay punk sensation. Since then, the band has risen to international fame, sold millions of albums, and become a fixture on *MTV, Rock Band* and the Billboard charts. In truth, you can't get much bigger than Green Day. The band even has its own version of the game *Rock Band*, a privilege previously granted only to AC/DC and the Beatles. And yet, the band still keeps the East Bay in its heart. Last year, though it scheduled only one concert at the Fox Theater in downtown Oakland, the band ended up playing a second show there the next night, then moved the party across the street to the Uptown for a third show. As if that weren't enough, the Foxboro Hot Tubs, a Green Day side-project band, dropped two shows in smaller venues, giving fans the chance to see Reverend Shyshuine Twitch, er ... Billie Joe Armstrong.

BEST FORCED PRODUCTIVITY ART COLLECTIVE

Immersion Composition Society

ICS-Hub.org

Perhaps you've heard of National Novel Writing Month, the East Bay–bred annual event that encourages participants to write a 50,000-word novel within the month of November. A worthy dare, sure, but ever tried writing twenty songs in one day? That's the central charge for members of the internationally dispersed Immersion Composition Society, which was born in Oakland in 2001. Founders Michael Mautner and Nicholas Dobson say their original talent was not to create a global movement or even to invite others to participate, but simply to defeat writer's block and overcome stubborn artistic boundaries by removing considerations of quality from the artistic process. The boffins who did set aside twelve hours in a day to produce as much music as possible, with the ultimate goal of twenty tracks, then share their work only with each other. Over time, the process revealed real gems and incredible discoveries. Their model was such a success, in fact, that friends and acquaintances across the country — and, eventually, small groups of total strangers throughout Europe — latched on to the idea and formed their own "lodges" for creating and sharing music.

BEST ANIMATOR

Bret Parker, Pixar

This former dancer and Oberlin College grad is one of Pixar's top animators and an enthusiastic dispenser of animation know-how as a mentor at Animation Mentor (an Emeryville-based online school founded in 2005) and an instructor at Oakland's California College of the Arts. Parker's students are treated to insightful critiques based on her thirteen years of experience as a go-to animator at Pixar, while her audience is wowed by the many memorable characters she has helped bring to life. Parker, who started out as a production assistant at Pixar, where she often stayed late into the night to glean tips from the studio's venerable pool of animators, is one of the rare animators who has worked on nearly all of Pixar's films. *Monsters Inc. Toy Story 2. The Incredibles* (where she was also the voice of Syd the babysitter) and *Ratatouille* all bear the Parker mark. Lucky us.

BEST CLUB

The Uptown

1928 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-681-8100
UptownNightClub.com

Cheap tickets and booze and local lineups have made The Uptown in Oakland a top gathering spot for Bay Area rock music fans and musicians. The Uptown is part of an ongoing renaissance in the area of Downtown Oakland near where Telegraph Avenue meets Broadway. It's no surprise that Green Day chose to debut its new album at the neighborhood landmark, whose stage also has seen the likes of Chuck D, Frank Black, The Germs, as well as local-boys-made-good High on Fire, The Lovemakers, and up-and-comers Thee Oh Sees. Owner Larry Trujillo considered the country's arts and entertainment downturn with solid local bands and free shows. Bands get paid less upfront "but the goal is to please the typical music fan who just wants to go out and have a drink. Mission accomplished.

BEST CLOUD MUSIC

Mog

Mog.com

The dream of all the world's music, streaming spontaneously from any device, be it computer, smartphone, or TV, is moving tantalizing closer to reality with cloud music provider Mog of Berkeley. The small tech start-up's Mog All Access takes off this summer, charging customers $5 a month for all they can stream and download from a vast library of hundreds of thousands of songs. It's quick, intuitive, well-designed, and even features automatic radio like Pandora, so you can hit just one button and let it play. Want to hear Nirvana B.I.G.? Centric discography or one-hit wonders? Done. Want to hear the all of Eminem's new release *Relapse* the day it comes out, along with all the other Tuesday releases each week? Mog's got your back. No catalog will ever be truly complete, but Mog goes a long way to bringing cloud music down to Earth.

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST PURVEYOR OF LOCAL CRAFTS

Beer Revolution
Uncles St. Bleak Lagnet
— sextrapolitre

Cherry Hoops, Nicole Wong
Outstanding products for Hula Hooping. I get all my hoops at CherryHoops
— sara

Christopher Burnes, Giovanni
This guy sells his own glow-in-the-dark pendant line. He creates little fun monsters that hang on pendants, earrings, and keychains, all of his own design, in addition to glow-in-the-dark silk-screened T-shirts. He is friendly and sells his wares on Telegraph Avenue.
— CaliforniaAvenue

Matrix Lighting
Beautiful lighting fixtures produced from hand-blown glass and hand-forged fittings in a variety of combinations.
— JDelmonaco

BEST REASON TO REMEMBER HYPHY

OLD TIMETHG WHITE THEG MEAN PEACH!
Hyphy and hippie are kissing cousins.
— sextrapolitre

Ghost of the Wisp
Looks like fun actually.
— hotyhoty

None
This is best forgotten.
— mrpants

BEST SINGER OR MC

Chloe Hollingsworth
This girl is the only person I know who can be seen at Berkeley EART sing, separate arms.
— CaliforniaAvenue

BEST STREET ARTIST

The Pink Man
He's the guy in a pink leotard riding a unicycle.
— Tori Welton

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

The community/public is invited to partic pate in making a positive difference for people living with **HIV/AIDS**

Attend Town Hall meetings in your area

Wednesday, July 28, 2010 – 2:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Location: West Oakland Senior Center, 1724 Adeline St, Oakland, CA
Town Hall Meeting, (Public Comments) 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Wednesday, August 18, 2010 – 10:00 am to 2:00 pm
Location: Elihu Harris State Building, 1515 Clay St, Room 2, Oakland, CA
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230 Bay Pl Oakland

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2117 Franklin St., Oakland

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Megasonic

Oakland 510-500-1400, MegasonicSound.com

Home recording ended the era of epic studios from coast to coast. Even EMI is selling Abbey Road. Only the strongest survived, and step Dad list-ish Grammy-nominated producer/engineer Jeremy Goody's Oakland based production facility Megasonic. Alongside a handful of talented engineers, Goody provides music recording to those who want to get out of their home setups plus mixing and mastering for all the bedroom producers out there. Megasonic also handles voice recording and production, plus publishing and licensing services, sound design, dialog editing, and other services for advertising, film, television, and games. Designed by TEC Award-winning Pelonis Sound and Acoustics, the three-room space has been in operation for more than twenty years, earning a 2009 Grammy nomination for *La Guerra No* by John Santos and the Coro Folklórico Kindembe. The kids might've heard Megasonic's work on former Oakland label Anticon's samplers or Anticon artists *Odd Nosdam*, Subtle as well Bright Black and big names like Disney and Cartoon Network.

BEST DJ

Hakobo

MySpace com/Hrsense

In an age where being a DJ Hero is just another rhythm game on the Playstation 3 and Xbox360, Oakland DJ Hakobo is making up huge points IRL ("in real life"). The force behind Fresno and the Culprits parties stands among the Bay Area's premier tastemakers and selectors. Whether it's the Stevie Wonder-themed "Wonder-Full" party with Bobbito and Spanna the Prince vs. Michael Jackson nights, the first-ever Jay Dee/J Dilla tribute, Gilles Peterson BBC Sessions (with Dwele, the Rebirth and Koch Medina), or Madlib and Peanut Butter Wolf sets Hakobo does it. The DJ style roams freely from hip-hop, soul, and funk, to disco, broken beat, and metric jams of house. You can find him at the best venues weekly like Mighty and Mezzanine as well as partnering with breaking East Bay crews like thePeople. A fan of Trunkademicks and Sake-1, he's a connoisseur of the fine art of mixing the classics with the future.

BEST COMICS IMPRINT

Image Comics

2134 Allston Way, 2nd Fl. Berkeley 510-644-4580, ext. 28-imagecomics.com

In case y all didn't notice, comics grew up, and American comic book publisher Image Comics of Berkeley helped them through puberty. *Spawn*, *Wanted* and *The Walking Dead* are just a few of the landmark titles from the imprint founded in 1992 by a disgruntled band of high-profile illustrators dedicated to controlling their own copyrights, and now among the four largest publishers in the states alongside DC, Marvel, and Dark Horse. Its mature content brings the visuals of film without the baggage of Hollywood's art by-committee. *Spawn* resonates to this day; Angelina Jolie's lackluster film adaptation of assassin comic *Wanted* only served to amplify the quality of the originals. Meanwhile, *The Walking Dead* is becoming its own TV show. And the capper: the announcement of Ziggy Marley's new book, *MARIJUANAMAN*, which will hit store shelves April 20, 2011. Ziggy's even at Comic-Con International with Image on Saturday, July 24, with artist Jim Mahfood (*Clerks: Mixed Tapes*) and co-writer Joe Casey (*God Land*, *Officer Down*).

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST THEATRICAL PRODUCTION

Amerikan Idiot, at the Berkeley Rep
Hmmmmm idiot! — *Dangerous sel*

Arsenic and Old Lace, at the Berkeley Rep
Affordable theater that was the most hilarious play I have ever seen in my life — my stomach literally hurt when I left. Also incredibly insightful. — *hilab*

BEST VENUE FOR LOCAL BANDS

Stork Club
If only Oakland residents came out to live shows. — *jeffbdg*

The Uptown
Or any number of awesome warehouses that still exist. — *jarcalcolejarbee.com*

Neurolux
They all blow. It's unfortunate, but on how you're going to play a party at a warehouse, you need to cross the bay for local music. — *mr.adunbeck*

BEST ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE

The Walking Dead

Image Comics

Speaking of *The Walking Dead*, n shambles into living rooms this October as a television show based on the hit weekly black and-white comic. Since 2003, writer Robert Kirkman and artists Tony Moore and Charlie Adlard have terrified tens of thousands with an endless depiction of what happens to some zombie apocalypse survivors. The first lesson: Other people are not your friends. The dead don't stalk, stalk, watch, and hunt. We do. The collapse of civilization provokes a massive culling, and the minnithe of that slaughter are reflected off the horrified psyches of former police officer Rick, his family and friends. It's a harrowing study in Mid Traumatic Stress Disorder as leftover bands of humans scrap for the bones: safety chest, water food, and shelter. *The Walking Dead* reminds us we've never left a Hobbesian state of nature; we've just temporarily suspended it in certain countries.

BEST MARCHING BAND

University of California Marching Band

510-642-8000, CalBand.Berkeley.edu

The high school squads may have that of

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Best new band with an old sound: The Sitter Pioneys

Chris Duffey

prep spirit, but they don't have prancing tubas. The Cal marching band is a world unto itself, with customs, superstitions, and the ability to spell out words at a collegiate level. The nearly 200-person-strong band's often overshadowed by the Bay Area by the antics of their rivals in the Stanford region—but bristling note-to-note, it's no contest. The Golden Bears bring it loud and proud to every home football game and to high-profile road games as well. The band isn't just stuck between Sather Gate and North Gate, either: you can hear it as it travels the city popping up at various primary and secondary schools as well as random civic functions. The Bears' band boasts a glittering alumni component as well: so you get trombones of all ages and all paces on the field. And if it's drama you want, there is little that happens between the sidelines that beats whether the drum major will catch the baton launched high into the air—So if the Cal gridiron stars are struggling to move the ball, never fear: the halftime show always travels in perfect time.

BEST RESTAURANT MUSICAL ACT

Hideo Date at Sushi California

2633 Martin Luther King Jr Way, Berkeley. 510-548-9737. SushiCal.com

Tucked away in a basement like room in downtown Berkeley, there's a hole-in-the-wall sushi restaurant where a very talented Japanese-American jazz guitarist plays every Monday and Friday evening. The Japanese food is good, too — with a few Okinawan dishes thrown in — but the soulful, peaceful music emanating from Hideo Date's fingers steal the show on these evenings. Date plays blues, jazz, rock, and, on the week of Michael Jackson's passing, hits from the former child star. On occasion other guitarists folks who play Okinawan instruments, as an upright bass player will join in. Date's laid back, old school style helps make this one of the best hidden sushi restaurants in the East Bay and keeps regulars returning for more.

BEST BOOKSTORE EVENTS

Books Inc.

1344 Park St, Alameda. 510-522-2226. 1760 Fourth St, Berkeley. 510-525-7777. BooksInc.net

With the riches he'd acquired during the California Gold Rush, Anton Roman set up shop selling books in Shasta. His store — long since bought, sold, burned, and rebuilt — is the original ancestor of what is now Books Inc., an independently owned eleven-store statewide chain whose two East Bay outposts, in Berkeley and Alameda, combine to host the region's most bodacious year-round calendar of readings, book launches, and other literary events. The bookstores place special emphasis on local authors and on topics and writers beloved by local readers, from radical politics to eco-travel to sustainable haute cuisine. Their calendars include such cult status eminences as bestselling mystery novelist Elizabeth George, food guru Michael Pollan and self-help maven Geneen Roth, as well as a glowing lineup of East Bayites. So far this year these include Anchee Min, Dennis Evanosky, Willis Barnstone, Soe Carter, Laza Dalby, Nina Lesowitz, Gina Welch, and Anne Leonard.

BEST LECTURE SERIES

Berkeley Arts & Letters

1321 Dwight Way, Unit L, Berkeley. BerkeleyArts.org

An internationally renowned array of much-lauded experts on everything from history to technology to spirituality to sports are featured speakers in a series whose qualifications surely include oodles such as "Only Nobel Pulitzer Man Booker and National Book Award and Whiting Award winners as well as individuals variously described as geniuses, revolutionary social observers, and the voices of their generations need apply." Independent bookstores Mrs. Dalloway's, Moe's, University Press Books, and The Booksmith join forces with the series planners to stage events at the First Congregational Church of Berkeley and Berkeley's historic Hillside Club. This year's dozen-plus readings have been a virtual who's who, featuring Pulitzer Prize-winning political historian and *Bomb Power* author Garry Wills, National Book Award-winning novelist and *The Things They Carried* author Tim O'Brien, and Australian novelist Peter Carey, who has won the Miles Franklin Award, the Commonwealth Writers Prize, the Vance Palmer Prize, the Prix du Meilleur Livre Étranger, and the Booker Award (not once but twice). ●


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Goods & Services



Best gay and lesbian wedding planner: Karen Finstar — Chris Duffey

BEST FASHION MADE IN THE EAST BAY

Leslie Evers

Bella Via 5607 College Ave Oakland. 510-653 1635 LesleyEvers.com

Berkeley-born designer Lesley Evers is known for her collection of fresh vibrantly patterned cotton wrap and button-down dresses slim tunics and swingy skirts that are equally adaptable to the playground a wine-country wedding and the boardroom (okay a mellow East Bay boardroom perhaps). With figure-flattering necklines flirty sashes and hip-swishing skirts Evers' clothes are evocative of an easier time when starry-eyed couples rode bright Schwinn bicycles to the beach on Saturday afternoons to collect seashells and memories. She calls her aesthetic "modern nostalgic" and we can't argue — the ease of slipping into any item in her collection of eliciting that naughty-sweet sigh from a lover who can't recall ever witnessing such a glamorous flush in your cheeks of the delighted gasp that escapes from your own lips when you glimpse your reflection in the mirror — they all recall a certain affection for happy times past and for the stylishly simple moments ahead

BEST WAY TO REPRESENT THE TOWN

"The Town" T-shirts

LikeMindedPeople.us

From 1962 to 1971 the Golden State Warriors were the San Francisco Warriors and played most of their home games at the Cow Palace. Then they moved across the bay to Oakland and changed their name to the Golden State Warriors. This meant retirement for the team's original jerseys, which sported a handsome typeset of "The City" above a circle that included the player's number and a silhouette of the Golden Gate Bridge. The design was simple and smart, and continues to enjoy popularity today on T-shirts and throwback jerseys. There's just one problem. The Warriors are in Oakland now and Oakland does things a bit differently. If San Francisco is "The City," Oakland is "The Town," a play on its place as the down home neighbor across the bay. Naturally "The Town" shirts make perfect sense whether you're a Warriors devotee, an Oakland booster or simply a fan of nice design. Local apparel company Like Minded People replicates the original logo to a T, replacing "city" with "town" and the bridge with one of Oakland's iconic port cranes. They shirts come in a variety of colors, including Oakland A's green and yellow

BEST LOCALLY HANDMADE BABY SHOES

Livie & Luca

888-LIV-LUCA. LivieandLuca.com

Face it. When it comes to cool kids shoes, big-box stores just don't have style. As an antidote, Albany-based Livie & Luca offers hand


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BEST BODYWORK
Miche Salon

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Pegasus Books

BEST BREWERY
Pyramid Brewery

BEST CAMERA STORE
Looking Glass Photo

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Harborside Health Center

BEST CANNABIS STRAIN
Purple Kush, Harborside

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CVS (various locations)

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Lenore Neufeld, Walkabout

BEST EDIBLE CANNABIS PRODUCTS
Kiva Confections and Purple Heart (tie)

BEST EYEGLASS SHOP
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BEST FACTORY OR WAREHOUSE TOUR
Sugar One/ St. George Distillery

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Grand Lake Farmers' Market

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Happy Boy Farms

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BEST VETERINARIAN
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BEST VINTAGE CLOTHING
Pretty Penny

BEST WINE STORE
Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant

BEST WINERY
Rosenblum Cellars

BEST WOMEN'S CLOTHING
Pretty Penny

music kicks for the toddler set through local shops and online. The shoes are "green," made of high-quality leather remnants that would otherwise be discarded, and when the kid inevitably grows out of them parents can send them on to Livie & Luca partner Art for Humanity, which donates used children's shoes to low-income families in Honduras (donors receive a coupon from L&L for free ground shipping on the next pair). But best of all, these diminutive designs come in patterns that make Mommy jealous: crossovers with a boy's silk-screened girl lolling on the beach, classic Mary Janes with appliquéd birds, elephants, or polka dots and orange "London" boots reminiscent of Ziggy Stardust. For fun and funky East Bay kids, these shoes will definitely fit

BEST HOMEGROWN KIDS' CLOTHING STORE

Ruby's Garden

6005 Telegraph Ave Ste C, Oakland, 510-595-5325
RubysBarden.com

This hip Temescal store is chock-full of locally designed and made children's gear from Ten Collection to Jasper Hearts Wren. The shop now also resells used clothing and shoes that are extra stylish at very reasonable prices. Trade in your kids' outgrown clothes for some new (or used) ones. The shop also has special parties called sibling swapping (from Spring to mom's night out, where a weary mom can get a free massage, eat locally baked cupcakes, and shop at a discount. The owners are very friendly and loyal to their neighborhood, and make a point of telling customers about the locally designed clothes. Other local makers include New Skool, Oaklandish, and Ruby Lee. The store also carries lines such as Zutano and imported Japanese monkey pants. The new gear is much pricier than their used section, but it makes for great gifts or an outfit for a special occasion. Email the store on Facebook or sign up for its e-mail list and receive all sorts of great deals such as free gear and steep discounts.

BEST NOUVEAU TOFU FACTORY

Hodo Soy Beanery

2923 Adeline St Oakland, 510-464-2977
HodoSoy.com

Housed in what used to be a candy factory and later a bakery Hodo Soy Beanery makes organic soymilk, tofu ready-made dishes, and yuba ("tofu skin") in a remodeled West Oakland factory. The production line is a mesh of old and new: traditional forms of tofu making, which includes hand-drying yuba, the protein-rich layer that forms on top of steamed soymilk, as well as upgraded, sterile, stainless-steel equipment that makes artisanal tofu products. Goods are sold at farmers' markets and at the factory, which is open to public tours twice a month (at 3:00. Tours include a video introduction and an explanation of how tofu is made, viewing of workers making tofu and other soy foods a Q&A, and sampling of their soymilk and dishes. Their fresh soymilk can't be beat — rich, creamy, and warm, made from organic beans from the Midwest. Founder Mark Tsai and his crew of artisans and entrepreneurs (food entrepreneur John Scharffenberger was recently named CEO) are proving that tofu doesn't have to be bland, but instead tasty healthy fresh, and locally made. Dishes at restaurants like the Slanted Door and Cafe Gratitude in San Francisco and Saul's Restaurant and Delicatessen in Berkeley recognize Hodo's products by name.

BEST HOMEGROWN DESSERT

The Popsicle

Just when you thought popsicles couldn't get any more awesome it turns out they were invented right here in our own backyard. Though the specifics of the story vary. The gist is this: In 1905, an eleven-year old Oaklander named Frank Epperson accidentally left a stirrer in a cup of soda overnight. The temperature dropped to record lows that night. Epperson, who died in 1983, awoke to find what he would christen the "epsicle" and later the popsicle. He sold the first one at an Alameda amusement park in 1923 and the rest as they say, is history. The popsicle — and its cousins, the creamsicle and the fudgesicle, also invented by Epperson — are now sold by the millions each year, and there are now no fewer than three different holidays honoring the frozen treats. A claim to fame for Oakland if there ever was one.

BEST HOMEGROWN LICORICE PRODUCT

Red Vines

AmericanLicorice.com

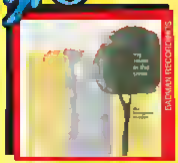
If you love licorice, you've probably eaten your share of Red Vines: thin red rope-like twists of candy you remember from childhood. Or ask your parents — they'll definitely recall gorging on them at the Saturday matinee. But you didn't know those are home-

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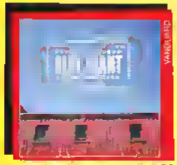
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grown Yup mash-up Union City by American Licorice Company, an institution going strong for nearly a century. And here are some other things you probably didn't know about Red Vines (not to be confused with the less-superior Twizzlers): They have a nine-month shelf life; they'll last longer in an air-tight container; and you can nuke them for five to seven seconds to make them soft again if they lose their luster. You can buy them in lots of about, from 2-ounce boxes of 16 to a whopping 64 ounce tub. Get yours today for a blast from the past.

BEST LOCALLY MADE CHOCOLATE

Chocolatier Blue

1904 University Ave., Berkeley; 510-705-9900
1909 Fourth St., Berkeley; 510-665-9500
ChocolatierBlue.com

There's no need to fly off to Paris or Brussels for a taste of the best handmade artisan chocolates money can buy — not when Chris Blue is working his magic right here in Berkeley at the eponymous Chocolatier Blue. The secret to Blue's exquisite seasonal chocolates is an old-school blend of raw Amadei chocolate from Tuscany (reputed to be among the best in the world) ultra-high-butter fat California butter...and — more often than not — a dash of whimsy. Case in point, Blue's early spring collection included one standout "ants on a log" that drew inspiration from that classic childhood snack of celery, peanut butter and raisins. The current autumnal collection features a heart-shaped "smores" chocolate that's sure to awaken campfire nostalgia and variations on the fruit cobbler theme...taking advantage of peak-season berries and pitted fruits from the local farmers markets. Purists might stick with one of the store's signature chocolates (like the deceptively simple "palet d'or" — the pinnacle of pure-dark chocolate-"I'll have what she's having" meaning-inducing goodness. Blue's confections are beautiful like gleaming jewels or tiny modernist sculptures. At $1.50 a piece these aren't cheap chocolates but come into the shop and try a sample. You'll be convinced of their splurge-worthiness.

BEST HANDCRAFTED RETRO CANDY

BonBonBar

415-918-7565 BonBonBar.com

Former Hollywood screenwriter and Culinary Institute of America alum Nina Wouk creates her BonBonBar candy bars the old-fashioned way in a West Berkeley kitchen using organic local ingredients. When she first became interested in creating sweets, candy bars caught her interest because they are classics beloved for many generations and can be flavored in so many different ways. She loved the retro panache of caramel cookies nougat, and marshmallows. At BonBonBar she handmakes melt-in-the-mouth caramels just like your great-grandmother would have bought at the corner candy shop. But thus being the 21st century Wouk also makes eye-poppingly yummy grown-up bars with rum, bourbon, Talisker 1992 Distillers Edition Scotch from the Isle of Skye and Maldon sea salt. Seasonal favorites include spunky pumpkin pie caramallows, whose chewy smooth nothing contains butternut squash bought at farmers markets. BonBonBars can be bought online or locally at the Alameda Natural Grocery

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST ART SUPPLIES

East Bay Depot For Creative Reuse
Can't believe what you find there. — *rehunge*

Lanny Plus
We've got to do SOMETHING with all that trash! — *santapehgre*

That place on Shattuck
Across from Stone Mountain & Daughters Fabric this place has EVERYTHING! (and good advice too). — *CaliforniaAnna*

BEST BAKERY

Crème
Tastes like the old world. Butter nuts, yumm! Somebody's divine grandmother made their cakes. — *Lynne Elizabeth*

Dreams That Dazzle on Ashby
Sometimes you just don't want a croissant. — *GenCharrello*

La Farine
I can't begin to describe La Farine's morning buns without drooling over my keyboard. Everything else is good too! — *jamie.mayhosen-public*

Nikolene Bakery
The cinnamon twists rock my world! The authouse cookies make me twirl! — *storm*

Neldam's Bakery
An Oakland institution soon to be moving to Hercules/Pinole area! — *Robertjm*

BEST BIKE SHOP

Bent Spoke
They look like pretty bike boys but they are like helpful nice people. — *Kessajay*

Lanny Plus
Oops! Did I just buy your bike for a dollar? Your loss. — *santapehgre*

Montano Velo
Chip! Best bike shop ever!!! — *krust*

Velo Sport Bicycles
They don't sell mountain bikes! — *Mike Vanderman*

BEST CUPCAKE

Love at First Bite Cupcakery and Bakery

1516 Walnut St., Ste. G, Berkeley; 510-548-5727
LoveatFirstBite@sbcglobal.net

Has your love affair with cupcakes soured, now that these ubiquitous treats have become almost clichéd? Then now's the time to bite into one that's guaranteed to reignite your sugary passion. Meet "Pretty in Pink," a tender little thing crowned with girly pastel swirls that tastes so intensely of fresh strawberries, you won't believe it. This $2.75 cupcake, offered every day year-round is the second best-seller at Berkeley's Love at First Bite right after the Red Velvet. Not many bakeries offer a strawberry cupcake — for good reason. It took owner Patricia Powell a long time to perfect it so that the vibrant berry flavor really shines through. Real strawberries are mixed into both the batter and the buttercream frosting for these amazing cupcakes that are baked fresh every morning. "It's pink. It's eye-catching," Powell says. "When people taste it they some back for it and tell their friends. Even guys like it."

BEST MOBILE CUPCAKE

Cupkates Mobile Cupcakery

510-306-9544, CupkatesBakery.com

Forget thin taco trucks and roach coaches — there's a whole new kind of catering truck in town. Or perhaps we should say, "cakering" truck! That's right: Think cupcake cram, plus chow wagon plus Twitter and you've got the Bay Area's first mobile cupcake shop Cupkates, a super-cute truck that appears (and disappears — don't miss it!) in various spots around Oakland, Berkeley, and Emeryville. Cupkates is the homegrown effort of Kate (natch) and her hubby who supply long lines of salivating lunch-breakers with high-end cupcakes in gourmet flavors like Caramel Salt S'mores, Double Chocolate Strawberry Swirl and, of course, Red Velvet. If you notice a crowd lined up where you've never seen one before, you may have stumbled upon the truck by chance — otherwise to find out where they'll be and when follow them on Facebook or Twitter. But to ensure you score your favorite flavors, show up early: these babies are selling like hotcakes — or like cupcakes.

BEST LOCALLY MADE LIQUOR

Tres Agaves Tequila

TresAgavesProducts.com

Tres Agaves may not be the very best tequila on the planet for snooty-snoots. But if you're a righteous margarita fan — if nothing tastes better no a late afternoon in warm July than a long thwack of the sour-sweet stuff through a salty glass rim — then hometown Tres Agaves, formulated especially for mixing, should be your go-to brand. Leave it to a Berkeley tequila and triple-maker to come up with the first margarita mix that uses only organic agave nectar as a sweetener. The Express first sampled the Tres Agaves blend in the courtyard at the Berkeley Rep prior to John Leguizamo's recent one-man show there. Was it fun? It was at this delectable medley of ingredients that made the evening such a memorable event? Who knows? But one thing is for sure: Where Tres Agaves goes, we will follow

BEST WINE FOR A BARBECUE

Urban Legend Cellars

821 4th St., Oakland, 510-595-4398, ULCellars.com

Frequent wine-trail hikers have a new destination: Urban Legend Cellars in West Oakland. Steve and Marilee Shaffer have spent enough of their lives in offices and now in their fifties, are bringing unique grapes to the neighborhood.

Have You Met Downtown?



More than ever downtown Oakland needs our support.

80 major restaurants fueling foodies and critics
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+
25 hot clubs & lounges
+
Two major concert venues
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Scores of specialty shops
+
40 annual festivals

It's no wonder downtown Oakland is drawing culture seeking crowds from all over the Bay Area. Unfortunately, several of our downtown businesses suffered damage this past Thursday night.

Let's all show our support by making a special effort ... shop, dine or [illegible] Oakland this summer!

To get the scoop on downtown happenings, please visit:

MeetDowntownOak.com
OaklandGrown.org

EAST BAY EXPRESS

The 2008 Ironworks (#15) the first in a series of wines that will be named for Oakland neighborhoods, is a blend of the Italian varietals Nebbiolo and Sangiovese both grown on parcels in Lake County. The wine testifies to its place and vintage with a slight smoky flavor that was literally imparted by a Lake County wildfire in late June, 2008! Some aficionados deem this "smoke taint." Bottom line: Ironworks pairs beautifully with any grilled meat — and even if you're using a gas grill you'll get some smoke. If grilling fish is closer to your game, try their Rosato di Barbera (S18), an Italian varietal rose with salmon. It's lush and fruit-forward but with an acidic backbone that will keep your barbecue cool when the temperature spikes.

BEST EAST BAY WINERY WITHOUT EAST BAY VINEYARDS

A Donkey and Goat Winery

2323 B Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-868-3174,
ADonkeyandGoat.com

For openers, it's clearly the best winery name in the East Bay (possibly the world. Do they make wine out of goats, or donkeys, or what? And, of the two owners, Tracey and Jared Brandt, which one more resembles what livestock? Sipping their hand-crafted, small production, vineyard-centric wines takes your mind off these unanswerable questions and onto more serious things. The Brandts learned their winemaking in France and approach their California fruit — purchased from topnotch vineyards, mainly in Mendocino and El Dorado counties — with a Gallic sensibility, listening to the grapes, leaning out the ferrous, seeking balance in a world of lip-heavy wines. From their portion of a Berkeley warehouse, part of the exploding East Bay grassroots urban winemaking scene, they turn out wines with modest alcohol, bright acid by next to no new oak, and no short agers (that rarity Syrah is the house specialty but anything under the Rhone sun shows up too — Grenache, Mourvèdre, Viognier Marsanne, and Roussanne.



Best bookstore: Walden Pond Books — Chris Duffy

BEST WINE SHOP

Vintage Berkeley

2113 Vine St., Berkeley, 510-665-9600;
2949 College Ave., Berkeley, VintageBerkeley.com

The Vine Street Pumping Plant has long kept people quenched. The landmarked was erected in 1910 to pump water and now keeps people sated at the Vintage Berkeley wine shop. The philosophy here is cheap-and-cheerful, with most of the wines weighing in at under $25. But that doesn't mean you'll be saddled with Two-Buck Chuck. The selection here is pulled from roads less travelled, from small-production California wines like Mercury and Bandini, to less-heralded old-world destinations like Hungary and Austria. There are still solid offerings from fine French and Italian vineyards — a handful of bottles come from Kermit Lynch Imports — but even these tend to come from lighter-trodden soil. What all this means is the knowledgeable staff can recommend exciting, oddball, everyday quaffers that sip like Domaine Romanée-Conti. Check their online calendar for daily tastings and special events (Vintage Berkeley also operates Solano Cellars in Albany.)

BEST EAST BAY WINERY WITH EAST BAY VINEYARDS

Thomas Coyne Winery

51 East Vallecitos Rd., Livermore, 925-373-6541
ThomasCoyneWinery.com

Tom Coyne started out as a home winemaker (while he was a chemical engineer for Clorox) then started working as a cellar rat at Rosenblum Cellars, then started making a little wine under his own label and selling it there in 1989 and finally made the leap to his own winery and vineyards in Livermore in 1994. Along the way, he became one of the Bay Area's best winemakers, specializing in Rhone varieties and multiple Merlots, but capable of doing a great job with anything from Pinot Blanc to Spanish grapes you never heard of, with local Livermore fruit and grapes from Lodi, Contra Costa County and the Sierra Foothills. The bonus trail is the winery itself: a venerable Livermore winemaking site, founded in 1881 as Chateau Bellvue, complete with historic buildings and a nifty view. Does Tom Coyne respect tradition? Here's a clue — he refuses to be bothered with e-mail.

BEST COMMUNITY MINDED BANK

OneCalifornia Bank

1438 Webster St., Oakland, 510-550-8400,
OneCalif.com

Simply put: one OneCalifornia Bank, FSB, is a community development bank, is the grooviest local bank around. It's a bank with a heart, because it operates with a socially driven mission to better poor and moderate-income areas (thanks to its component eight arm, OneCalifornia Foundation). That charitable organization dreams up initiatives to stamp out social ills like poverty and discrimination. The relative newcomer wants to be part of the community and puts its customers' successes, not its own profits, first by helping its clients succeed. This bank seeks out the likes of struggling non-profits and small business owners as its customer base, deftly guiding them through the complex world of finance to get the loans and monetary cachet they need to be community players. Plus OneCalifornia Bank founders Tom Steyer and Kat Taylor are fun loving do-gooders who are just a little wacky, singing, for instance — yes, singing — about their bank at the many community events the bank sponsors. They give the bank a personality leaning from its dreary contemporaries. The bank is brilliant at picking projects everyone can get behind, from rebuilding homes in East Oakland to assisting Zimbalawean orphans and improving Cubist Space & Science Center programs and helping folks restore their credit.

BEST LOCALLY BASED CHAIN

Pet Food Express

2131 Williams St., San Leandro, 510-346-7777
PetFoodExpress.com

Want to feel good about shopping at a chain? Then go to one of the thirty-plus Pet Food Express stores in the Bay Area. The San Leandro-based pet-loving company started by dog trainer Richard Levy in 1986 — basmasanne Mark Worrell came onboard in 1990 — treats pets and their humans right, and has hooks out the wazoo to prove it. Shelves are stocked with high-quality foods and products, staffers know what they're doing, and the specialty pet retailer vows to beat its competitors' prices. Pet Food Express is really a one-stop shop for pet lovers, who can add a new member to the family by adopting pets from the many shelters and rescue groups that often set up in the stores. Owners can have their little darlings vaccinated at the low-cost vaccination clinics Pet Food Express offers. And as if that's not enough, they can wash and dry their pets there, take training classes, and pick up the latest toys, treats, and products to entertain their charges. Pet Food Express makes going to the pet store fun. Take Fido along, and he'll second that emotion.

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST BODYWORK SERVICES

Berkeley Chiropractic
Stupf. — bakesmoman

Ginger Berlinger
If by bodywork you mean massage? — stemlio

BE Kane Motorworks
Best Porsche work ever. — California Jane

BEST BOOKSTORE

Barnes and Noble
I know it isn't PC, but they have everything. — Jim Hartley

Barnes & Noble at Jack London Square
Oh wait, they closed that down for some reason, didn't they? — darvillas81

Bay Area Teen Book Exchange
FREE BOOKS! — Kingrose

Cosmic Relief
These are books too, right? — hjimho

Dusal
Love those little reviews taped all over the shelves! — zacobot

Marcus Books
The nation's oldest independent and black family-owned bookstore. Providing literature fueling Oakland's revolution in politics for 50+ years. — ahmahn

Moe's
The rest closed. — aeje

The Library
These are tough times, yet — mrsalomshek

BEST BREWERY

Altamont Beerworks
I know it's on the other side of the Bay but it's the truth! —CaliforniaJane

Triple Rock
Ale Trip Rocks. — ebrair

BEST ART STORE

Artist & Craftsman Supply

2573 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-704-4040,
ArtistCraftsman.com

The funky-dark warehouse feel of this treasured art shop in Berkley is made bright by the incredibly friendly and knowledgeable staff

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Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST CAMERA STORE

[Camera on Franklin & downtown Oakland]

One little old man who knows a lot about cameras. — *mikeo*

Looking Glass Photo

Film is not dead! — *Russell Ell*

Sarbens

This type of ammon starts is quickly disappearing, leaving only Best Buy and Costco-type places for camera selection. This is a wonderful store that needs to be supported or it doesn't disappear. — *SCOOPER*

BEST CANNABIS DISPENSARY

Caremichael

El Cerrito. Angry security dude though. — *CaliforniaAnne*

BEST CANNING SUPPLIES

?

Who cans stuff these days? — *Sibley Ishaw*

BEST CAR DEALER

Clayton Mitchell

An idea before its time... — *KC*

Cars are evil.

No such thing as a good car. Try or tarnation there ain't be no best car dealer — *wOc*

BEST CHEESES

Cheese Board

No contest. Cheese Board is the single factor that keeps me from moving to France. — *Lynne Elizabeth*

Piedmont's Cave Collection, Berkeley

See how cannabis stacks from local dispensary — *Martina Cawston*

BEST CHILDREN'S STORE

Goodwill

Best place EVER to buy inexpensive kids stuff — *ys*

who eagerly point you to unique materials you just can't find at one of the mere corporate art supply chains. While you're likely to come in for a quick purchase, don't be surprised if you find yourself at a standstill an hour later lost in an inspiring assortment of fine papers, oversize drawing pads and art utensils you never knew you needed. Where else can you pick up a sketchbook in which each piece of paper boasts a different color and texture, sure to delight your imagination? Staffers give the impression that they believe all the time in the world to help you collect everything you'll need to create your masterpiece — if you're an artist in experimentation mode who happens to be seeking something extra special for a project, there's no better place to turn.

BEST CRAFT SUPPLIES

East Bay Depot for Creative Reuse

4699 Telegraph Ave Oakland. 510-547-6470. CreativeReuse.org

The East Bay Depot for Creative Reuse is a veritable treasure trove for the visual artist and connoisseur of knick-knacks. The Depot collects discarded goods, saving them from landfills and junk-yards and redistributes them at low cost to supplies. Thus, you will find vintage furniture, home decor, paper supplies and various oddities all at arbitrarily low prices. Barrels full of corks and bottle caps, cheap plastic figurines, shells and trinkets: the Depot has everything you need to deck out your art car, make a giant shrine, you name it. All this, and a friendly staff low prices and a great friendly philosophy of waste reduction. Since 1979, the depot has been a valuable resource for East Bay artisans, artists, and the other assorted weirdos who make up our vibrant art community. Got a hoarding problem? Don't know what to do with all those empty film canisters? The depot is also a great option for getting rid of some of your clutter and hopefully getting it into the hands of someone who will make something beautiful out of it.

BEST DIRT

American Soil and Stone

2121 San Joaquin St Richmond. 510-292-3000. AmericanSoil.com

Even though the Bay Area has green spaces galore, there's a dearth of good fertile dirt. Many urban gardeners have to buy their dirt, and the best place to go is American Soil and Stone. Opened 25 years ago in Berkeley and relocated to Richmond 8 years ago, the store has a wide array of dirt from Local Hero Veggie Garden to Super Grape Compost Mix, but the general consensus is that blues last in the dooryard bloom of host in Wnh Whitman Cowpoot Mix. Besides dirt, the yard at American Soil and Stone is covered with rows of bins and buckets of cut and uncut, polished and rough rocks, decorative tiles, fancy garden appurtenances, slate and river rocks, zen fountains, and varied ground covers.

BEST NEW MOVEMENT

Homemade and Homegrown Makeup

Independent laboratory tests have found that many of the top lipsticks brands contain lead. It's a scary fact but many products sold in the cosmetic aisle exempt from FDA oversight, are similarly tainted. Many teens and young adults are deciding that it's more environmental economical and healthy to make or buy indie-free cosmetics. At web sites like MakeYourOwnNet.com, women trade easy-to-make recipes as alternatives to products like mouthwash, acne solutions and lip gloss. You can find most of these ingredients in your kitchen, your backyard, or at any number of local health-food stores. The more complex recipes sometimes call for mail-order ingredients, but if you look hard enough you can find everything you could possibly need right here in the Bay Area.

BEST SEED SWAP

Bay Area Seed Interchange Library Seed Swap

2530 San Pablo Ave. Berkeley. 510-558-9178 EcologyCenter.org/BASIL

Seed swaps are sprouting up everywhere, giving home gardeners a chance to score free seeds and seedlings from each other while discussing what grows best (and worst) in their neighborhoods, streets and even blocks — taking locavorism to whole new levels. Most swaps in this area have been inspired by the Berkeley Ecology Center's annual swap — this year's was the eleventh — where live bluegrass bee-down music and a potluck feast accompany the changing-of-hands of thousands of seeds representing hundreds of varieties of fruits, vegetables, flowers, legumes, ground-cover trees, and more. It's held in late February to give gardeners a head start on the post-frost, pre-spring peak planting season — and its founders belong to the seed-saving movement, devoted to preserving heirloom varieties that might otherwise vanish from existence as corporate seed companies increase their dominance over what's available for sale. Seeking a seed swap in your area? Ecology Center volunteers can help you find one.

BEST SPECIALIZED RECORD STORE

House of Soul

2619 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-645-3076

House of Soul is an unpretentious and rather small storefront that could be easily overlooked, but if you're looking for soul records or CDs, this is the place to go. Here you will find everything from Isaac Hayes to Michael Jackson, as well as all kinds of funk, hip-hop, and R&B. There's also an extensive DVD selection that includes live concerts of all your favorite soul acts as well as movies ranging from action and drama to, hmm, shall we say erotic? With the flashback-inducing smell of incense wafting down the street, and a large selection of body oils and scents, House of Soul is as much a pleasure to the nostrils as it is to the ear drums. Afrocentric decor is in abundance, and you can be sure that there will be some righteous tunes blasting on the wheels of steel. The specialized selection and neighborhood feel make House of Soul a great alternative to big-box chain record stores, and you know that your money will stay in the community. And isn't that really what it's all about?

BEST GAY AND LESBIAN WEDDING PLANNER

Karen Hester

Here Comes the Pride 510-464-6544. HereComestthePride.com

How's this for family values. Rush Limbaugh can marry four times but the crooner he hired to do his music — none other than Elton John (?) — can't get legally hitched. Never mind. As equal-rights heroes fight the good fight in California's legislative halls, gay and lesbian couples can move ahead in preparations for their big Day with the help of wedding planner Karen Hester of Here Comes the Pride. A long-time community activist and events coordinator — she's organized major outdoor festivals in the East Bay like Berkeley Earth Day and Out and About Rockridge — Hester books her clients up with gay and lesbian-inclusive florists, and musicians and offers packages that range from a wedding for two to adventure events in which the whole wedding party can kayak, hike in giant redwoods, or go on a scavenger hunt through San Francisco or Berkeley. Whatever package her clients choose, with Hester love prevails.



Best recycled/salvaged goods store: Urban Ore — Chris Duffey

BEST NEEDLE-WHISPERER

Brian Barlay

Temescal Acupuncture Center 330 41st St., Oakland. 510-654-7040. BrianBarlay.com

The thought of someone inserting needles all over one's body can cause acupuncture-phobia for the squeamish. But in the competent hands of Brian Barlay at Temescal Acupuncture Cen

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Readers Say the Darndest Things

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Whoever does their designs, it doesn't matter. It's all about REPRESENTING! — *Artifact*

Paso Cullen

Stuff for dogs and their people. — *pocopoe*

BEST CRAFT SUPPLY STORE

Last Bag Depot for Creative Reuse

Not necessarily the best place to find paint brushes but definitely a great place to browse for supplies and inspirations you didn't know you needed. — *adamave*

BEST DOG WALKER

Me, myself and I

Who can afford a dog walker? — *mr.dukenbok*

BEST EDIBLE CANNABIS PRODUCTS

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HASH CHOCOLATESMOH OMG. — *Marnee Gimson*

BEST EYEGLASS SHOP

Dr. Jo Lee Ofice

That's in Fruitvale ... it's not fictitious. — *nonspalgro*

Phoenix Optical

Groovy vintage glasses you ain't that anywhere. I get compliments on mine every single day. — *Phoenixoptical*

UC Berkeley School of Optometry

Indecisive little fucnist! — *Mike Vondeman*

BEST FARMERS' MARKET

Oakland Old Town Friday Mornings

Cheap, interesting produce and fewer annoying outfits! Jackpot! — *Cherupal*

Temescal

It's got the vibe. — *Fourkis*

ter needles are not only no big deal they're somehow deeply relaxing. From the moment clients step into the foyer of this renovated house in Temescal — a neighborhood long a place of healing, what with the Ohlone Indians sweat lodges — the vibe is ultra-smooth but also friendly, inviting frayed nerves to *just calm down*. Barlay wonders through interviews with newbies to discern the therapeutic angle to take, and before too long the needles are in the heat lamps are on and the client is floating free in a kinder, gentler world. The center has four licensed acupuncturists, a homeopath, several massage therapists, and a stocked herbal pharmacy. In addition to regular old acupuncture therapies include electro-acupuncture (light electrical stimulus applied directly to the needles to boost their effect), moxabustion (a particular kind of heat therapy using artemesia herb, aka Chinese mugwort), and cupping (a muscle relaxation technique). Who knew needles could feel so good?

BEST PERSONAL COACH

Molly McCormick

Mind-Body Integration Counseling and Coaching
510-336-9591 MollyMcCormick.org

The concept of coaching can seem so well, *junior high* and forced: like a demented combination of homeroom and boot camp laps across the soccer field until your lungs are on fire, hitting the floor for yet another round of pushups, rushing the other kid until you're both seeing stars. But that's not the kind of coaching Molly McCormick of Mind-Body Integration Counseling provides. Rather than dishing out mandatory torture, McCormick helps clients look more deeply at their lives, acting as a friendly witness. She'll help you set goals sure, but using what she calls an "appreciative approach" — a way of being curious about what might happen next and taking a proactive, instead of reactive, stance toward opportunities and challenges. And don't worry. McCormick walks her talk, too, showing through her own life that personal growth is in the effort, not necessarily in the accomplishment. In the 2008 Bicycle Tour De Colorado — a seven-day 403-mile ride with 38,000 feet of climbing — she rode 321 miles and climbed 25,050 feet in six days. With McCormick, it's progress, not perfection, that makes for a life well lived.

BEST ARTIST FOR TATTOO VIRGINS

Chunmy Alexanian

Tattoo 13 4617 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-985-1313, Tattoo13Oakland.com

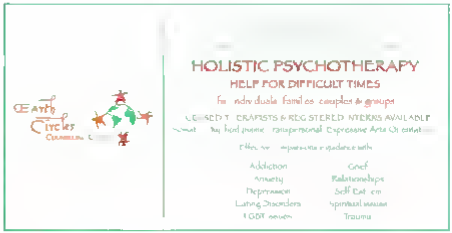
Everyone and their mother has got a tat nowadays, but for those who haven't yet taken the plunge, Chunmy Alexanian at Tattoo 13 is the man to see. Covered himself in tattoos of all kinds, tall and broad shouldered — like some kind of parallel ink universe football quarterback — Alexanian has been engraving clients for more than 20 years, and can do anything from simple designs (think stars and butterflies) to the really complex (machine guns exploding on an upper arm, a back covered in roses, or one of Maurice Sendak's Wild Things on the smooth skin of a calf. Whatever). Tattoo 13's macho vibe might seem intimidating, but Alexanian sets clients at ease with light banter that makes the actual carving seem like a walk in the park. (Well not exactly ... it is a needle, folks.) And better yet? According to Alexanian, his name comes from an ancient Armenian dialect and translates to "artistic warrior who overcomes all adversity." Perfect.

BEST PLACE TO BUY MYSTERY GROCERIES

Koreana Plaza

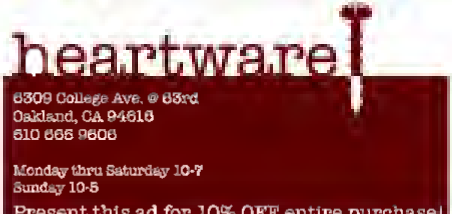
2370 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-986-1234, KoreanaPlaza.com

Looking for a cheap way to have fun on a slow weeknight? Pop by this Korean grocery store, wander the aisles, and let the packages and seafood overwhelm you. Then grab a few ingredients you've never seen before (packaged items without English writing are the best) and head home for research and a meal you've never tried. Along with aisles devoted to every kind of instant noodle dish you can imagine and dozens of shelf sauces, you can pick up seasonal kimchi, aloe drinks, fish cakes, cuttlefish or snails. Not









feeling that adventurous? There's an aisle full of cookies, candies, and cakes for instant palates, and for a sure-fire delight try instant chili soba noodles and mushroom-shaped chocolate-coated cookies reminiscent of Pocky. Of course, the fun is in the mystery. Remember nowhere in the world that bag of dried fish is a treasured snack for someone; maybe it'll be your new favorite indulgence.

BEST PLACE TO BUY BOOTS

Golden Gate Western Wear

963 Contra Costa Blvd, Pleasant Hill.
925-827-1014. 12453 San Pablo Ave, Richmond.
510-232-9664. GoldenGateWesternWear.com

What do you wear to the neighborhood hoedown? Or on that dusty hike through Tilden Park? Well, authentic cowboy attire, naturally. Golden Gate Western Wear is the first place an East Bay-er should go for cowboy hats, shirts, holsters, belts and gigantic, gaudy belt buckles. You can even find real ropes and leaves for those cuquerros who might actually wrangle a few cattle. But the most exciting part of a trip to this Bay Area shop is ogling over the boots. Golden Gate stocks dozens of men's and women's leather cowboy boots, and all of them are beautiful. They're not cheap — most run between $200 and $300 — but they make a statement they last forever and you're not going to find a better selection anywhere in a fifty-mile radius. If you ain't afford to shell out that much it's worth a trip just to smell the leather and listen to the canary music they proudly pipe through the shop.

BEST CRAFT FAIR

Feria Urbana

Location varies FeriaUrbana5F.com

Feria Urbana — quasi-Italian for "cool hipster pop-up shop featuring stuff that person you maybe should consider getting a gift for absolutely can't live without" — may have been born in San Francisco, but lately the event featuring two dozen local designers who elevate hand crafted jewelry, fabric, letter-press stationary baby onesies, and everything in between into art forms, has become a decidedly East Bay fixture. (And even when held in San Francisco, a big chunk of participants hailed from this side of the bay.) Monthly fairs — often held during Oakland Art Murmur's First Friday night festivities — bring out the most talented and business-savvy designers around. Admission is free, and you're unlikely to leave without having scooped up a treasure or two — as well as the delicately good karma that comes with supporting local artists.

BEST SALON

Seven Salon

5356 College Ave Oakland, 510-601 7778.
Seven7Salon.com

Who doesn't love the stimulating scalp massage that often accompanies a vigorous hair washing at an upscale salon? Now imagine combining that lather rinse and repeat with a simultaneous fancy-leather-chair-generated back massage as well as a glass of free beer or wine, and you'll understand why this chic upper Rockridge salon might just make you wish you could stop in on a weekly basis. Seven's highly talented hair-shearers and sculptors can be trusted to take any type of hair from ho-hum to fashion-photo-shoot ready. The receptionists make you feel like royalty when you arrive for your appointment, the stylists never scream when they spot evidence of your DIY bang trim, and drugstore dye job and the mirror has never been kinder.

BEST STYLIST TO PIMP YOUR DREADS

Wendy Allen

Remedy Salon 1195 65th St Emeryville.
510-547-5000 RemedySalon.com

People in the know say that anyone can have dreads, but DIY locks take patience — we would be talking years depending on ones hair consistency. Who has that kind of time? Take your head over to Emeryville's Remedy Salon, ask for Wendy Allen, a 25 year hairstyling veteran, and in about three hours you'll be out on the street with a full set of well formed happy nappies. Allen's specialties are dread perms and synthetic dreadlocks; she's been a student of the Rastafarian in Minneapolis, the look exists who developed the dread perm technique in 1986 in which the stylist (hack)combs the client's hair into dreadlock shapes then treats it with a chemical solution. Also in her favor: In her spare time, Allen performs cool torches with FatChance Bellydance, an American tribal-style belly-dance troupe based in San Francisco. Look, if you're gonna go for a dread perm — and it's not cheap — who better than a belly-dancing goddess to do it for you?

BEST HOMEGROWN BARBER SHOP

Al's Barber Shop

1592 Webster St., Alameda, 510-436-1705

Barber shops once dotted the land, providing more a place to gather, get a hair cut, shave, and shoeshine. Over the past half-century long hair and unisex salons have each taken a bite out of the business, and though the stock of next-generation barbers is as thin as the outgoing generation's hairlines there are still great shops to be found. Al's is a no-frills establishment with a homage that dates back to the 19th century. The eponymous Al has owned the shop since the 1950s, and his younger protégé Nick carries on the work of his own great grandfather. Both barbers provide classic crews, tapers, fades, and brush cuts, and Nick also works more contemporary styles. They're quick, affable, and the warm cream/straight razor finish leaves the back of your neck really neat. Closed Sunday and Monday and no appointments, but the parking is easy, the conversation is friendly, and the shop's a pleasant place to wait your turn.

BEST VET

Montclair Vet Hospital

1961 Mountain Blvd. Oakland, 510-339-8600
MontclairVetHospital.com

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Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST FARMERS' MARKET VENDOR

Almond Boy

He is FoUNZ! Too bad he has a girl friend. — *whitney*

East West Gourmet

These afghan guys are so fun and personable. — *Come On Now*

Kawabata Bamboo

I'm not sure quite how to spell it but they have the best stone fruits all summer long. — *adamsax*

Thai Chocolates

Goth chocolate! How can you go wrong? — *bitterwoman*

BEST FLEA MARKET

Ashby

It's like a vacation to the Caribbean for free! — *Chowgirl*

Cullenders

Sorry but delightful. — *carmenn Sandcastle7*

Laney College

Especially if you're looking for hot items! — *ljudicon*

BEST FRUIT OR PRODUCE SWAP

Village Harvest

They harvest fruits from people's trees and distribute them to shelters and food banks. — *rwales*

BEST FURNITURE STORE

IKEA

Furniture and meatballs! — *Tara Wilson*

Wooden Duck

Amazing recycled wood furniture. I love that they can tell you where the wood came from. — *greenjordaine*

BEST GREEN BUSINESS

Art Fisher, Berkeley

Installed our Solar Electrical system with the best stuff and worked with us to get the installation totally painless. They check occasionally to see if it's still working right. — *frances*

Nicholson Bakery

They gave me crap about asking for an extra bag one time, but they gave me credit and respect for bringing my own mug. — *sherri*

hospital offers precisely the things you'd yearn to find in your own doctors — prompt appointment keeping, undivided attention, undeniable warmth, and an indisputable knowledge of what makes one puke/burp/moan/fuck/poop funny. Since only the best will do for your pet, Montclair answers that call (and really any call your animal-child might have) — and then some. The top-notch veterinarians never make you feel rushed, patiently answering any question you might have (including, in one instance, a small fact two other vets had not noticed, whether the gender designated to a cat pre-adoption was correct ... nope!). And for those of us who easily forget the last time we, let alone our pets, had an annual physical, the folks at Montclair will send you a friendly e-mail reminder that your furry or feathered friend is due for their check-up. You may pay a tad bit more for the unparalleled expertise, but you'll never doubt that it's worth it.

BEST LOCALLY OWNED TIRE STORE

Rouse Tire Service

2340 Harrison St, Oakland, 510-834-9938, RouseTire.com

Unless you're picking up ZR rated tires for your Lamborghini Murcielago, buying a new set of radials isn't usually a great deal of fun. Much like running shoes, tires last longer then their models stay in production, so new tires usually means new research. Reading Consumer Reports or crowd-sourced reviews on TireRack.com can help you narrow things down, but they're no substitute for the advice of a knowledgable, trustworthy dealer. That's where Sue Rouse of the family-owned Rouse Tire Service comes in. Sue is a no-nonsense tire dealer whose shop keeps a great stock of commonly installed tires, and whose staff is friendly, responsive, and fast. If she doesn't have what you need (and she knows what you need before you even ask) she'll get it for you, and she'll use her network of multiple suppliers to find you a fair price. Rouse may cost a few dollars more than Costco, but you'll get better tires, better service, and the benefit of experience that Sue Rouse has developed over many years in the business. Plus, you can hang out at the Whole Foods cafe across the street, rather than shop for a platoon-size jar of mayonnaise.

BEST SHOP FOR SMUGGLING FOOD INTO THE MOVIES

E-Z Stop Deli

2293 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-3544, Alkon.com/ezstopdeli

Movie theaters generally ban outside food and beverages, but if there ever was a good place to pick up snacks to sneak into the movies, it would be the EZ Stop Deli. If you can look past the expiration date on a bar of chocolate, you'll find a rotating treasure trove of discounted snacks on the EZ Stop counter. Picking up a bargain bite at the EZ Stop is resourceful and cuts down on waste — it's also cheaper than any movie theater. For just a buck or two, a thick bar of fine chocolate can be yours. Selections have included dark Belgian chocolate, high percentage cocoa for pairing with Zinfandel, and the occasional vegan chocolate bar. Not only does EZ Stop stock the goods, but almost any time of day somewhere nearby there will be a curtain rising on a movie. Check the California around the corner, the Shattuck or United Artists just to the south, or hike up to campus and slip into the Pacific Film Archive. There's no real justification for sneaking snacks into the movies, but if you do, ease your guilt by supporting the theaters with your drink purchase.

BEST PLACE TO BUY SEAFOOD

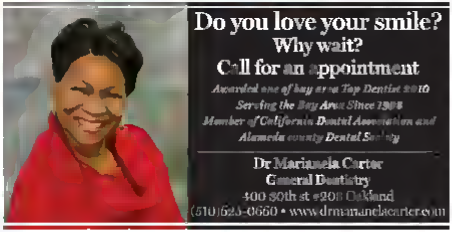
Tokyo Fish Market

1220 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley.











510-526-7243 TokyoFish.net

Sure Berkeley Bowl is the more convenient one-stop-shopping option Ranch 99 is a livelier scene and Whole Foods is well more expensive But for the best overall experience when buying fresh seafood in the East Bay Tokyo Fish Market is the place to go This small family-owned market has a great selection (including but not limited to an impressive array of the fish and shellfish popular in Japanese cuisine), and the quality is topnotch Best of all the staff is extremely accommodating and knowledgeable — they'll gladly explain in loving detail the differences between the four different types of salmon they might have on offer on a given day and which one is the freshest. As far as fish markets go this one is as clean and odor-free as they come, and there aren't the swarming crowds you'll find at the more popular supermarkets in the area. The store also has a small produce section and an extensive well-priced assortment of Japanese food products — it's your best bet if you're looking for a specific brand of miso or just want to stock up on Pocky to get your snack on.

BEST UPCYCLE STORE

Fernseed

3906 Lyman Rd. Oakland. 510-207-4050. Fernseed.com

Fernseed owner Krishne Dang went from corporate worker to refab queen who turns other people's discards — broken bibles, empty tequila bottles, dressers with missing parts — into something you'd want to show off in your living room The Dimond district store is literally moving into her house this month which will be staged with indoor and outdoor furniture, artwork and plants (her succulent terrariums are very popular) — all for sale to the public She plans on having open houses two weekends a month beginning July 17, and by appointment. Her goal is to save stuff from being dumped in the landfill. She also uses donated paint, scrap fabrics, and eco-friendly materials Her website's blog shows off her and other local artists' reclamations on an almost daily basis. In a world where things are thrown away so easily Dang's mission is infectious and she isn't afraid to get her hands dirty — she does a lot of the hard work of refurbishing and painting herself Being stylish while saving the earth has never been easier: get yourself an original Dang before it's gone.

BEST TEA DEALER

Coffee Conscious

1312 Gilman St., Albany 510-526-2294

What? Great tea from an independent local coffee merchant? You bet. We're talking great loose leaf tea that's half the price of Peet's and twice as tasty (Don't get us started on Starbucks' sad attempts at tea.) At Coffee Conscious, run by a genial Chinese grandmother you'll find two-dozen killer loose-leaf black teas from Gunpowder to Ceylon to decaf apricot. Especially noteworthy: a mellow lychee black tea that's fragrant without being sassy and a full bodied decaf English Breakfast. You can't beat the prices Four ounces will cost you $3.05 to $4.40 (Compare that to Peet's, which charges $6.45 and up for the same amount.) Coffee lovers note: Coffee Conscious also sells a dozen different coffees by the bean.

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST HAIR SALON

Fashion

Karen James knows how to do the hair. — *mefeyes*

Kaiser Salon

Diana is the goddess of rock and roll haircuts. — *hallbent_shallot*

BEST HOMEGROWN TRANSPORTATION PRODUCTS OR SERVICES

Bicycle Gallery, Bicycle

It's free! — *Bill*

Nextbus

A great little local company that has revolutionized waiting for the bus. — *fpmurphy*

BEST JEWELER

Metalwerking

Totally homegrown! Everything custom made locally — *kermitrex*

BEST KOMBUCHA

Lee's Original

This guy really knows his stuff — he's like a mad scientist — and it's delicious! — *maxemyhere@mindspring.com*

None

That shit is gross. — *joyinthewoo*

Synergy

I like how it has more than a trace of alcohol. — *tgeesky*

BEST LINGERIE

A La Folie

She sells the kind of lingerie that makes you feel beautiful no matter what mood you're in! — *Sarah Cheney*

Beauty and Antiquity

I've never heard no nonny great puns about books in one place! — *Chanyal*

BEST LIQUOR

St. George Distillery, Alameda

Great booze and color. It makes you feel like it's 1849. — *Galen*

BEST PRODUCE

Colusa Market

4701 Colusa Ave Kensington, 510-527-7936

The joke around the neighborhood is that Colusa Market, in the amount of space Safeway devotes to its bakery, satisfies every heart's desire: Beanitos no-oil microwave popcorn. Ines Rosales sea-salt tuna, Bob's Red Mill gluten-free baking flour, thirteen Aidells sausages and Aidells chicken and turkey meatballs, and fresh sushi delivered daily. The place is a boutique grocery minus the boutique prices. Now picture the bodraggled producer most corner stores. Colusa Market owner Ik (pronounced like) Joh

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST LOCALLY GROWN PRODUCE

Monterey Market

Very sad to see Bill go, but still the freshest and cheapest produce around. They support local farmers. Indicate where all their fruit comes from and have increased their organic and pesticide-free items, which are also indicated in signs. — *Floatingclouds*

Berkeley Farmer's Care Collective

Local and amazing! — *Marina Genova*

BEST LOCALLY MADE CHOCOLATES

Chocolatier Blue

Best anywhere, not just locally — *chowhounds*

Vivo

Goth chocolate! — *bakerceman*

BEST LOCALLY MADE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Guitar O Basura

Built in Peace Owner Pete Webster — *greg sadler*

BEST LOCALLY MADE PRODUCT

Girl on Bliss Earrings

Red handmade earrings made out of recycled bicycle inner tubes. — *brownmountaingoat22*

Slinks Clothing, Perfect Hoodie

Designed and sold in Berkeley. Made in Union City. The best fitting hoodie ever. 100% cotton heavy weight, and affordable. — *PantsPeople*

The sacrilegious waffle at Brown Sugar Kitchen

I'm a proud Oaklander who's proud that we have the best waffle in the west! — *Pearkit*

BEST MANICURES AND PEDICURES

A Royal Nail Salon on Telegraph

It's all about the fish pedicure. — *zoozy66*

heads for the San Francisco and Oakland produce markets at 4:30 a.m. five times a week in the summer and four times in the winter. His trusty fruit knife at the ready, he prowls the stands, sampling fruit and vegetables. Colusa Market does not stock twelve kinds of organic white peaches — you have to go to Berkeley Bowl for that. Instead, it stocks the best organic white peaches — and that's plenty good enough, Josh's produce never rots before it ripens, it's fresh as can be, and cheaper than all most farmers' markets. About a third of the selections are organic. Those white peaches (yellow ones too) run you $1.99/pound. You can also find organic fennel leeks, and white forelle pears. Maybe Colusa doesn't have organic red pears today — but you can bet the pears they do have are scrumptious. And isn't that the point?

BEST BAKERY

Crixa Cakes

2748 Adeline St., Berkeley, 510-548-0421
CrixaCakes.com

Berkeley may not be the first place you'd think of as being home to a world-class Eastern European bakery, but regulars at Crixa Cakes know there isn't anyplace better for a fresh-from-the-oven taste of the Old World. The Eastern European pastries and buns sold at Crixa are top-notch and unbeatable as they come — fragrant with spices and flecked variously with currents and nuts. And even if you're a more conservative baked-goods eater who doesn't know a plyog from a lilfy, you'll still find plenty familiar goodies including what are hands-down the best fruit pies in town. During the late spring and summer when berries and pitted fruits are in season, these pies are at their spectacular best. At $5 a slice, they aren't cheap, but you're talking about a hefty, satisfying slice — enough for two to share, but no good. But you'll want the whole thing to yourself. Go early if you can. The pies (which come out at 11 each morning) and many of the buns tend to sell out early.

BEST PLACE TO BUY AND RENT BOARD GAMES

Dr. Comics and Mr. Games

4014 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-601-7000

Tabletop games are experiencing a renaissance of sorts, especially among grownups, thanks in large part to the surging popularity of "German-style" board games — games where you're more likely to have to manage a railroad company or build up a colonial empire than say, blow up your opponent's battleship. Although many of these new games originate from Europe, East Bay board game aficionados can get their geek on right here in Oakland, preferably at Dr. Comics and Mr. Games. The Piedmont Avenue store carries plenty of childhood favorites in addition to more complex modern classics like Dominion or Settlers of Catan, so it's perfect for both hard-core gamers and gift hunting grandmothers. While other game stores might have a bigger selection, what sets Dr. Comics and Mr. Games apart is the friendly, super-knowledgeable staff. Just tell one of the store's board game specialists what you like, and they'll give you three or four spot on recommendations for games you probably haven't even heard of yet. The store also has a great rental program that allows you try a board game out for a week at roughly 10 percent of its cover price. If you do decide to purchase the game later, they'll refund the rental fee.

BEST PLACE TO BUY BEAUTIFUL JUNK

Alameda Point Antiques and Collectibles Faire

Runway 7/25 Alameda Point, Alameda
510-522-7500, AntiquesBySay.com

If you like old pretty things but don't care for the musty smell and sooty-her atmosphere one associates with the average antique store (or your grandmother's attic), then the Alameda Point Antiques and Collectibles Faire is

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the place for you. On the first Sunday of every month, more than 800 sellers gather outdoors at the site formerly occupied by a naval air base to form what is easily the largest antiques and collectibles show in the Bay Area — and also the most festive. It's like a small, bustling village where the hipsters and the senior citizens set join happily together to browse everything from beautifully seasoned cast iron cookware to vintage maps to every kind of little trinket you can imagine (especially at the $1 tables where you can jostle with all the other bargain hunters). Every item is guaranteed to be at least twenty years old. Hardcore collectors will fork over $15 to get first dibs on the best merchandise first thing in the morning, but more casual shoppers can show up anytime after 9 a.m., when the admission fee is a more modest $5. Don't arrive too late, though, or you'll miss out on all the best stuff!

BEST HOUSEHOLD PAINT

GLOB

510-865-2270, GlobHOme.com

GLOB makes earth-friendly paint from fruits, vegetables and other natural ingredients. "Flavors" (colors) like pomegranate, basil green and lemon verbena will surely please the palates of eco-gurmets and artists. This is one of the coolest new eco-art products out there, made right here in a Berkeley studio. We're not talking about paint you buy in gallons for your living room walls — this is for the budding small artist or adult artists. The six colors are not only inspired by nature, but made from ingredients found in nature — fruits, vegetables, flowers, and spices — and the fruity scents and a nice luck. The Berkeley-based company run by artist Ashley Phelps, sells its six colors in small packets (six packets for $12) a lid for $15 that includes all six colors and compostable jars, and larger jars (four jars for $18). All are in powdered pigment form just add water and you've got paint. The paint is available online and in select stores. It won't hurt you, nor the environment, to try it out so go on, get your hands dirty — and breathe easy.

BEST ROBOT STORE

Boss Robot Hobby

2953 College Ave Berkeley 510-841 1680.
BossRobotHobby.com

Boss Robot Hobby is the place to geek out and get your robot and Anime fix. This teeny well stocked store is in a busy intersection of Berkeley's Elmwood district — but it's easy to pass up if you aren't paying attention. Once inside, however the store will leave lots and of its like wide-eyed and amused. There's a large Ultraman figure, for example, plus toys, robot kits, and "urban vinyls," those little art figurines, galore. Thankfully storeowner Johnny is laid back — a must in a small space that could leave one feeling claustrophobic (this one doesn't). Most popular are remote-and radio-controlled helicopters, cars, and trucks — stuff that, if it breaks, is fixable and not just your average throwaway plastic toy. The shop also buys, sells, and trades vintage Japanese toys. They have Gundam model kits — action figures popular in Japan and elsewhere in Asia that have developed a following here — which are hard to find in an actual store. This is a specialty shop at its best, and even if you're not into flying helicopters it's still fun to take a peek inside.

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST MEN'S CLOTHING

Blank

Where else can you walk in and have people wait on you for the perfect pair of jeans? Nowhere in the universe do you such an amazing array of jeans exist with such great service and prices. An invaluable resource and Berkeley institution. If you don't know Blank, you might as well move somewhere else. — *Tiburonette*

BEST MOTORCYCLE SHOP

East Bay Motorsports

Dude, get dialed and check out the lil array of goodies! — *pennfullyan*

BEST NATIVE PLANT SELECTION

UC Botanic Garden

Without a doubt, the premier native plant collection in California, including plants for sale. — *Jon Hartung*

BEST NEW BUSINESS

Beer Revolution

Null sale. — *semispinero*

Vino Volo

Wine Bar at Oakland Airport. — *grey sadler*

BEST PET STORE

Holistic Hound

A large selection of high-quality raw foods you won't find elsewhere. My cats love the food and love the picture of health since put on this diet. — *PlentifulHands*

Paws and Claws

This place is what Home Grown means! The owners live in and support this Durand neighborhood. They are local entrepreneurs for sure! — *dgille*

Pet Food Express

They match any online price! Just bring in a print out! Knowledgeable staff? — *mviere*

Your Books Don't Belong

Why go to Costa Rica when you can go to Your Game Bird? — *Lynn Hornunte*

BEST PHARMACY

Elegiment

I still miss them! — *Sarah Cheney*

BEST PLANT NURSERY

UC Botanic Garden

Huge collection from around the world at great prices. — *Jon Hartung*

BEST NEIGHBORHOOD FABRIC STORE

Piedmont Fabric

3858 Piedmont Ave Oakland, 510-655-1213.
PiedmontFabric.com

Piedmont Fabric is your friendly neighbor-

hood fabric shop. It's not as big as the larger local shops or chains, but the employees will make time to walk you through any project. They'll also share in your joy along the way: whether you're sewing some curtains or making your first quilt. Prices are comparable to other independent fabric stores and the small shop carries all the basics, plus they often add new fabric to their collection. Owner Lan and the other employees are knowledgeable about sewing, and more importantly are extremely patient with all types of customers. Homegrown takes on a new meaning when you have the tools to make your own gear: from baby clothes and gifts to a fabulous new outfit for yourself. The store has an easy environment where you feel welcome and the workers there are stylish, to boot. Homemade has never been so cool.

BEST CANNABIS DISPENSARY

Berkeley Patients Group

2747 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-540-6013
BerkeleyPatientsGroup.com

Behind an imposing barbed-wired fence on a busy commercial stretch of San Pablo Avenue this 2,500-square-foot cannabis mecca offers patients dozens of pot strands, ranging in price from the really cheap ($10/eighth) to the really expensive ($60/eighth). Make a purchase after consulting the knowledgeable and friendly white-lab-coated staff. Then light up using one of the vaporizers or glass pieces available. In the smoking lounge. Brownies, cookies, beverages, extracts, concentrates, and seeds round out the medication menu, while free massage, acupuncture, counseling, therapeutic, and educational services are also available on-site. If that's not reason enough to visit, Berkeley Patient Group is open eleven hours a day, seven days a week, and has rewards cards that give customers 5 percent back on every purchase. It's obviously enough to impress at least one stoner demigod: B-Real of the rap group Cypress Hill makes the occasional visit. The selection, services, and celebrity clientele can create a crowded chaos-sary and long lines for help. But have no fear: the staff is known to pass joints down the line, letting patients medicate while they wait.

OUTSTANDING CANNABINOID SPECIALIST

Dr. Philip Denney

Normal Health Center 1901 Broadway, Oakland, 510-839-1723

When Dr. Philip Denney took over Normal Health Care in downtown Oakland this year, the medical cannabis evaluation clinic was adrift. The subterranean recommendation mill wasn't very inviting or professional, and its manic physician had just lost his medical license. Pot causes zero deaths per year, but that's no excuse to degrade professionalism. Enter Dr. Denney — a rural family practitioner who bought Normal Health Care, shook up its staff, and moved it out of a basement and into a clean, well-lit, glass-encased space on Broadway this summer. Denney insists on wearing a white lab coat and giving patients a clinically unimpeachable level of care. Healthy kids aren't going to get his nod for pot use, and he catches actual health problems in adults just looking for a buzz. Moreover, Denney regularly takes his expert opinion to court where he defends patients caught in the maw of the criminal justice system. Bonus: With his big white beard, he looks like Santa.

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST RECORD STORE

Amoeba
It's still a business! — *mr.salomback*

A-1-A-Gal
Awesome vinyls, great owner, fun pit-stop — *tumiray*

Musical Offering
Best selection of classical. — *bibbiet*

BEST RECYCLED OR SALVAGED GOODS

Urban Ore
It's pretty pricked over (sometimes I think the staff grabs all the good stuff first), but it's the only salvage place in those parts that still sells at salvage prices. — *mr.salomback*

BEST SEX SHOP

Good Vibrations
Telling us that sex is not dirty unless you want it to be for decades now... — *JSF-304*

BEST SHOE STORE

Boss
Hands down, when all you have is $15 to $20, you can find a nice pair of heels or flats in many name brands when you need to. — *EB*

BEST SPECIALTY RECORD STORE

Down Home Music
The best selection of roots music and blues, period. — *ballhoot_shallot*

BEST TOY STORE

Mr. Maggy's — REDACTED
A Berkeley institution ... no need to see it go. — *Split Bridgley*

Good Vibrations
[redacted] — *Maxwell Flash*

BEST CANNABIS STRAIN

All Star Jack Frost, Berkeley Patients Group

2747 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-540-6013
BerkeleyPatientsGroup.com

It's uh — like — really good. Jack Frost is a powerful sativa-dominant strain which means an upbeat (relatively) energizer, and fun high. It won't put you right to sleep or anchor you to the couch; you're more likely to want to go outside, and experience the world. Jack Frost looks amazing, too, with globular bright green buds encrusted by a thick coating of white crystals, and it has an herbal smell reminiscent of everything natural, wholesome, and good in the world. The strain also has an exceptionally strong, almost citrus-like taste when smoked, and its functional uplifting effects can last

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SPA DOG BOTANICALS CITY CAR SHARE
PIZZA POLITANA FROG HOLLOW FARM
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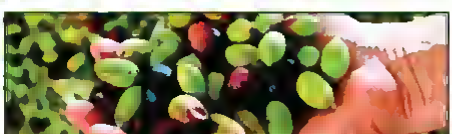
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Readers' Picks: The Darndest Things

BEST T-SHIRTS
T-Shirt Orgy
If you can't find a T-shirt here, then it hasn't been made. — *Ianotine*

BEST VETERINARIAN
Dr. Mike Berlin @ PET Emergency
The BEST doctor at the WORST times! — *Bkexpress*

BEST VINTAGE CLOTHING
Crossroads Trading
These kids know what to stock! — *Jen Hartung*

BEST WINE STORE
BinoMio
A Concord frunnest. — *DogInMyCoPilot*
Grocery Outlet
Selections beyond one's imagination. Such great prices as well! — *Leile*

hours. As medication, it's particularly effective at increasing appetite and relieving stress and anxiety. Priced at $60 for an eighth or $18 per gram, the All Star Jack Frost is one of Berkeley Patients Group's highest-grade strains. — *evan.*

BEST GLASS

Big Al's Smoke and Gifts

2382 Telegraph Ave. Berkeley, 510-540-0764

If you're the kind of person who names their bongs, then you're probably going to want to stop by Big Al's Smoke and Gifts on Telegraph Avenue near UC Berkeley. It has built a solid reputation by selling high-end glassware from Taco, KOOK, Illadelph, JBD, Lux, and Zong, packing the top-shelf items into its narrow little shop alongside some of the best local and national glass artists including Eastbeen Genius and Mike Bro. Big Al's is family-owned and -operated, and down to haggle over its affordable selection. And like a true mom-and-pop B. carries plenty of replacement downstems, bowls, and other parts when your piece breaks. It doesn't reek of incense, or deal in much else besides smoking goods, and the staff is quite friendly and knowledgeable if you're not a jerk. As the high-end glassware market reaches new heights, Big Al's will be there, showing newbies and veterans the way.

BEST VINTAGE CLOTHING BOUTIQUE

Pretty Penny

5488 College Ave. Oakland, 510-594-9213
PrettyPennyClothing.com

This field thankfully has been getting crowded in the East Bay these past few years. Down at Luka still holds its own with its hardcore Eighties and rocker bent. Mars Mercantile gets props for size and longevity. Twisters and upstart Mercy Vintage excel at pretty, pretty dress-up fare. But right now, Pretty Penny stands alone. The space itself is lovely, and therefore a pleasure to spend time (and money) in. Da. staff is friendly and knowledgeable; the shoes and menswear are blissfully plentiful, and the Penny consistently boasts a perfect alchemy of stock (both vintage and locally sourced "first hand") that practically guarantees that, if you come in looking for that one specific thing — dove-grey Oxfords, a summer dress with pockets, that certain shade of gray/shera — you'll find it. Chalk it up to owner Sarah Dunbar's experience buying and selling at both Mars and Brooklyn vintage megastore Beacon's Closet, and her and her staff's eye for trends and quality. Oh, and the prices aren't bad, either.

BEST LOCAL FLEA MARKET

Northern California Swap Meet

Laney College's Parking Lot at 7th and Fallon sts. Oakland. 510-769-7256, most Sunday mornings from 6 a.m.-3 p.m.

The legends are all true. This flea market is everything you've heard and more. It is a haven for the sale of *all* market toilet paper and socks, a venue for trash enthusiasts to hock their finds, and the cheapest place to get DVDs in the Bay Area. The Laney Flea is a mix of everything you could want at a flea market. It's big. It's full of great deals. There are fruit stands, homemade Mexican food, and freshly squeezed lemonades with sprigs of mint — all right next to piles of cables, videogames, and old clothes. Oh, and don't forget to pick up some of the cheap knock-off Mac cosmetics.

MIST APPLE TURNOVERS

Neldham's Danish Bakery

Neldham's, 3401 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-888-1367 NeldamsBakery.com

When the hankering for an apple turnover hits you — admit it, it happens! — Neldham's is the place to go. This eighty-year-old-plus-but-endangered East Bay institution turns out flaky, buttery, apple-filled pastries that you've never seen the likes of before. They're huge and hefty, two-hundred beauties that explode with flakes flying when you bust a bite. These are too messy to eat like an ordinary sweet treat in the car. Don't try it unless you don't mind bits and pieces of rendevous in your lap, the carpet, and the gear shift. Sugar dusted, oozing apple filling, and thick with buttery buttery goodness, these turnovers are the bomb. Delicious, lovely to look at, and even better to eat. Better hurry to the Telegraph location because its days are numbered. Word is Neldham's will be up and running in Pinole and other East Bay locations, so the turnovers will still be available, but not in the quirky storefront with the door that sticks.

BEST GREEN BUSINESS

East Bay Green Tours

2150 Allston Way, Berkeley 510-704-0879, EBGT.org

What's better than one green business? Five green businesses. And what's better than that?

A business devoted to supporting some of the most ethical and innovative green businesses in the East Bay often five at a time. East Bay Green Tours, housed in the David Brower Center Berkeley's greenest building, formed in late 2008 as a way to show off the East Bay's emerging green corridor. From there, its tours expanded to themed tours open to the public (organized around themes such as waste, water energy and building) and custom tours designed for specific groups (the Oakland Museum of California Berkeley High School, and Contra Costa Community College have all been clients). Founder Marsea Ladagna has established an impressive, ever-growing network of contacts at local startups like BTTR Ventures, the Emeryville outfit that grows mushrooms in coffee grounds; city departments such as Berkeley Public Works, and corporations such as Waste Management. Her tours offer participants a cohesive and entertaining peek inside the minds of some of the greenest thinkers in the East Bay — and, indeed, the entire country.

BEST SHOE STORE FOR POLITICIZING YOUR FEET

Shuz of Rockridge

6012 College Ave Oakland, 510-655-1742

The gardening-clogs-turned-shoes known as Crocs are certainly a maligned style of footwear but they can hardly compete with Birkenstocks enduring stigma as an instant symbol of all that is granola. Here in the Bay Area where liberal is merely moderate, the German-made sandals that rose to counter-cultural prominence during the Sixties and Seventies may not be a fashion faux-pas, but they still make a statement. Their straight straps and square buckles summon an era of liberalism environmentalism and progressive thought that precedes Prius and seems a bout of authenticity. Plus, their form-fitting cork soles are ridiculously comfortable. That's why the sandal that everyone loves to hate remains a hot seller at Shuz of Rockridge, formerly a Birkenstock-branded store and still an authorized repair center. Salespeople can hardly keep the shoes in stock. The small store carries a host of styles — the widest selection in the Bay Area, one employee avowed — and can special-order whatever's missing. The salespeople are highly knowledgeable about Birkenstock fitting, maintenance, and repair and share their expertise generously. Inside these four walls is a safe zone; strut your Berks beyond them at your own risk.

BEST FARMERS MARKET

Grand Lake-Oakland Farmers' Market

Splash Pad Park, Grand Ave and Lake Park Ave. Oakland, 415-472-6100 Agriculturalinstitute.org

The East Bay boasts some splendid farmers markets. Each seems to perfect the character of its neighborhood, from sly down-to-business Jack London Square and activism minded downtown Berkeley to Blue Bottle coffee-boasting Temescal and expansive, family-minded markets through the tunnel. But when it comes to harnessing the zeitgeist and offering an enjoyable, all-inclusive experience, nothing beats the Grand Lake Farmers' Market. Situated in a park near the edge of Lake Merritt and across the street from the Grand Lake movie theater, it serves metaphorical double-duty as both the heart of Oakland and a de facto melting pot. Visitors come from all directions — posh resides in the hills, mid-century apartments around the lake, urbane downtown lofts, modest homes in Eastlake and North Oakland neighborhoods — to shop for produce and crafts, dine on prepared

BEST COMPANY

As Suzs

Diligent, honest, and goal-focused workers. — *Lello*

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— *bobo353*

BEST GOATS

Indigent Farms

— *NicolasS*

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Redwood Ranch Stables

— *roguishcr*

BEST LAUNDROMAT

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BEST MOVIE RENTAL STORE

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— *soundmind*

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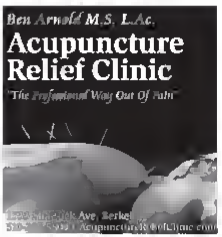
— *KoolAndJoss*

GREATEST TO BE MISSED

The Big Lungs on 51st

Big Lungs had been a go-to everything general store for the East Bay for what feels like forever. Even though it was corporate, it was completely tailored to the needs, wants, and desires of East Bay shoppers. This past year new changes have been felt the most: a major downshift in quality, quantity and variety — AND *ensuing* another discount card to tie in your wallet. RIP Big Lungs, CVS just doesn't do you justice. — *YoKaren*





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RETAIL/SERVICES

La France Boutique	3423 Fruitvale Avenue, 94602
Firefli Nails	5026 Woodminster Lane 94602
California Canoe & Kayak	405 Water Street 94607
East Bay Restaurant Supply	49 4th Street 94607
Baby World	4400 Telegraph Avenue, 94609
Reed Brothers Security	4432 Telegraph Avenue, 94609
17 Jewels Salon and Spa	4601 Telegraph Avenue, 94609
Clausen House Thrift Shop	4834 Telegraph Avenue, 94609
SAGRADA Sacred Arts	4926 Telegraph Avenue, 94609
Oaklandish	Temescal Farmers Market & Grand Lake Farmers Market, 94609-94610
Silver Moon Kids	3221 Grand Avenue 94610
Newfangles for Tall Fashions	3223 Grand Avenue, 94610
Silver Lining Jewelry	3340 Lakeshore Avenue 94610
Audio Visual Consultants	3730 Grand Avenue, 94610
Uhuru Furniture & Collectibles	3742 Grand Avenue 94610
re4m	2054 Mountain Boulevard, 94611
TOUCH Salon & Gallery	2068 Antioch Court 94611
Melt Massage	www.meltmassage.net, 94611
LIZA SONIA Jewelry	5127 La Salle Avenue 94611
Discovery Shop of the American Cancer Society	127 41st Street @ Piedmont Avenue 94611
Lirelle Gallery of Contemporary Jewelry and Art	3960 Piedmont Avenue 94611
fiftyseven thirtythree	4125 Piedmont Avenue, #5 (Second Floor), 94611
Azure Salon	4315 Piedmont Avenue Studio 101 94611
Calm A Salon	4315 Piedmont Avenue Suite 102 94611
Polish on Piedmont Nail & Skin Spa	4319 Piedmont Avenue Suite 100 94611
J Miller Flowers and Gifts	4416 Piedmont Avenue 94611
The Rising Loafer Café and Bakery	130 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza 94612
Pro Arts	150 Frank H Ogawa Plaza 94612
The Cathedral Shop	2121 Harrison Street, Suite 250 94612
qo la lai gift & accessories lounge	386 17th Street 94612
SaHara	5510 College Avenue 94618
Hearthware	6309 College Avenue, 94618
Bunnywarez	www.bunnywarez.com
Rose Quartz	3255 Lakeshore Avenue 94610
Bella Ceramica	3982 Piedmont Avenue 94611
The Jolly Grove	2070 Antioch Court 94611
Alain Pinel Realtors	5211 La Salle Avenue 94611
Green Science Academy	1611 Telegraph Avenue, Suite 450 94612

GROCERY STORES

The Food Mill Inc	3033 MacArthur Boulevard 94602
Farmer Joe's Marketplace	3426 Fruitvale Avenue 94602
Mandala Foods Cooperative	1430 7th Street 94607
Farmer Joe's Marketplace	3501 MacArthur Boulevard 94619

RESTAURANTS/CAFES

Taqueria Guynoso	3329 Foothill Boulevard 94601
La Farine Bakery	9411 Fruitvale Avenue, 94602
It's A Grind Coffee House	555 12th Street Suite 105 94607
La Farine Bakery	4084 Piedmont Avenue, 94611
Park Avenue Bar and Grill	4184 Piedmont Avenue 94611
Farley's East	33 Grand Avenue, 94612
Yo's Restaurant	59 Grand Avenue 94612
La Farine Bakery	6323 College Avenue, 94618

WMA

OAKLAND BICYCLES.COM

foods, enjoy entertainment, and take in the life-affirming sights and sounds all others doing the same. Every Saturday morning throughout the year the market hustles — fresh, vibrant, diverse, laidback, and 100-percent Oakland.

BEST PLANT NURSERY

Berkeley Horticultural Nursery

1310 McGee Ave., Berkeley, 510-526-4704, BerkeleyHort.com

Grab a couple of pastries from Hopkins Street Bakery around the corner, then wik away e sunny morning fantasizing about planting your own personal Eden at this expansive, nursery, which occupies almost an entire Berkeley block. The vibe is tranquil with trickling fountains, dozing cats, and serene bearded guys in overalls happy to offer advice on Jester flax, Australian tea trees, or growing cape gooseberries from seed. A sniff worthy citrus section filled with exotics like yuzu, pummelo and Persian sweet lime, will make you forget all about workaday Meyer lemons. Under the shade canopy the huge selection of Japanese maples, camellias, hydrangeas, and rhododendrons emboldens anyone who has struggled to liven up a dark and dreary spot. The yard-less among us can choose from plenty of container-loving plants and herbs that will be happy to occupy a spot on a patio or windowsill. Don't leave without visiting the weird albino fallopia japonica: its giant cotton-candy pink stems and white leaves look like something out of Dr. Seuss.



Best cupcake: Love at First Bite Cupcakery and Bakery — Chris Duffey

BEST BOOKSTORE

Walden Pond Books

3318 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-832-4436, WaldenPondBooks.com

Often overlooked in the pantheon of East Bay indie bookstores, perhaps because it hosts fewer in-store readings and author events than some of its brethren, Walden Pond Books perseveres as a book lover's bookstore. Located in Oakland's Grand Lake neighborhood since 1973, sandwiched between a roster of cafes and across the small yet densely stocked store is arranged with the immutable soul of an old-school bookstore. This is evident the moment you walk past the shelves of discount books lining the storefront and beckoning from the sidewalk. Selling both new and used books, the place smells of yellowed pages and worn covers. Weather-beaten boards creak underfoot between rows of paperbacks and hardcovers of every persuasion: non-fiction general fiction, fantasy/science fiction, mystery/crime fiction, travel children's, outdoors, home and garden and more. Local authors are featured through out, and a collection of rare books both at the front desk and upstairs in the Rare Book Room offers collectors a chance to nab first editions, signed copies, and more. The whole place proclaims that even in the iPad age physical pages possess an inimitable power.

BEST WEIRD BOOKS

Bibliomania

1911 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-836-5723, Bibliomania.us.ws

With more than 90,000 books and 100,000 pamphlets, Bibliomania in downtown Oakland is like stepping into a portal of cool, weird artifacts. Founded in San Francisco's North Beach in 1974 and later moved to Berkeley before settling in its current spot, the store has all the while specialized in social movements, modern lit, children's books, and military history. Owners Daryl and Jean Van Fleet man the stacks daily with a priceless eye for rarities and oddities that just shames the modern big-box bookseller experience. From Weather Underground zines to out-of-print Nietzsche in German, the bookstore also carries crazy stuff on Africa, anarchism, Charles Bukowski, Jack London, Mormonism, mountaineering, Trotskyism, UFOs/flying saucers, and much more. Expect scarce and rare titles, often protected in plastic, alongside $5 anthologies on Greek stoicism. The Van Fleets say the logo for Bibliomania depicts a man with a mad passion for books, a graphic originally appearing in the 1494 edition of *The Ship of Fools* and reproduced on the title page of the 1809 first edition of *Bibliomania* by Thomas Fergusll Dibdin. Browse heavily.

BEST ANTIQUE STORE FOR SERIOUS BIBLIOPHILES

Paulines Antiques

1427 Park St., Alameda, 510-523-9944, PaulinesAntiques.com

For serious book collectors, the hunt is the thing at Pauline's Antiques, a sturdy fixture on busy Park Street in the island city of Alameda for 54 years. Not only do Pauline's shelves sag with thousands of books, there's no method to their arrangement at all — wherever there's a space, that's where it goes. So if you're looking for early editions by spy novelist Eric Ambler, African American historical novelist Frank Yerby, or some rare medical textbook or nature guide from thirty-plus years ago, you'll have to carve yourself a fat chunk of time, take a deep breath (both in awe and in realization of the long search that lies ahead) and patiently dig away. Even the most determined hedgehog may leave with a niggling sense that they missed some tiny cul-de-sac on Pauline's two floors worth of goods. Which means only one thing — you gotta back later and look again. By the time you get there more may have been added from Pauline's warehouse where it is rumored, thousands of more items await the light of day.

BEST GENRE FICTION BOOKSTORE

Dark Carnival Bookstore of the Imagination

3086 Claremont Ave., Berkeley, 510-654-7323, DarkCarnival.com

Since 1976 Dark Carnival Bookstore has cast a long, inviting shadow for the East Bay fans of genre fiction. Its two jam-packed floors of around 40,000 books (both new and used) from the fields of mystery, science fiction, and, especially fantasy and horror, stand almost unmatched among Bay Area bookstores in the range of material. From the latest junky pulp thriller to rare — and possibly signed — masterpieces by such highbrow masters as Stephen King, Peter Straub, Jonathan Carroll, and Thomas Disch, Dark Carnival will keep genre enthusiasts browsing for hours. There's also a great selection of non-fiction, including art books. For our readers and gift hunters, the store learns with a cornucopia of tacky toys and gift items ranging from the Librarian Action Figure to giant blow-up monster dolls. If you're looking for party favors, this is where you go. The bookstore also hosts author readings and signings (most recently Thomas Perry, best selling author of *Strip*.) Watch for the flying black bat outside.

BEST OLD WORLD GIFT SHOP

Bella Ceramica Fine Italian Imports

3982 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-601-7938, Shop.BellaCeramica.com

The ambience of Bella Ceramica, the Italian import gift shop on Piedmont Avenue in Oakland, is so bright and cheerful, you wonder why they even need to turn on the lights. After many years as a San Francisco wholesaler owner Claudia Luporini moved to the East Bay in 1999 to open his own retail store. He sells a festive selection of limited-edition, handmade ceramic dishware, vases, tableware, and other accessories in many different patterns, every piece hand-to-hand. A most avuncular salesman, Claudio will also happily chat about his trips to Italy — made several times a year — where he diligently searches up and down the peninsula for the finest handcrafted earthenware, from such centers of craftsmanship and artistry as Sorsa, Gubbio, Vietri and Deruta. From there, you'll want to hop the next flight to Italy. Another special treat for shoppers is the annual holiday sale of hand painted ornaments, the kind of decoration that makes you want to throw away the cheap tinsel for good. Like many of the other pieces, these can disappear fast, so get there early. *Bellissimo!*

BEST GROCERY STORE THAT'S NOT BERKELEY BOWL

Piedmont Grocery

4338 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-653-4144

Unlike Safeway and other gi-normous grocery stores, Piedmont Grocery doesn't stock

BEST ORIENTAL FILM SOUNDTRACK STORE

Intrada Records

510-336-0016 intrada.com

After many years as the Bay Area's center for film score aficionados in That Other City Across the Bay, Intrada Records owner/producer Doug Fake took his excellent exclusive movie soundtrack store into cyberspace in the mid 1990s, while setting up shop in Oakland's Montclair Village. For film geeks and music buffs who believe film and TV music deserve more respect than they get, Intrada makes that point better than anyone. All the Old Masters, such as Erich Wolfgang Korngold, can be found in its deep catalog, plus an endless selection of genuine cult oddities like the original score to the Texas Lone Star version of *Not of This Earth*. You'll also find the newest scores by the hottest new kid on the soundtrack scene (and composer of the score for *Lost*) Michael Giacchino, and not nearly enough film scores by the mind-blowing, prolific, and inventive Ennio Morricone. Rare among film soundtrack stores, Intrada is also its own record label, producing and releasing many film scores on its three specialty labels, a genuine accomplishment that makes Intrada not only a unique store, but maybe the unique music label in the Bay Area.

BEST PLACE TO GET AN OFFBEAT WEDDING GIFT

The Bone Room: A Natural History Salon

1568 Solano Ave Berkeley 510-526-5252. BoneRoom.com

If you know a nature loving couple getting married and want a gift that goes way beyond anything you'll find at Macy's, you must get more medieval and offbeat than The Bone Room. The Berkeley store, now located on Solano Avenue, has been a haven for collectors of bones and fossils (both genuine and replicas), mounted insects, and other remains of "things once living" since owner Ron Dimble opened it in 1987. You can also buy seashells and other animal remnants such as claws, horns, skin and shells. You can even buy Museum Jumping Beans. As far as actual wedding gifts go, any one of the mounted displays of iridescent butterflies known as "sweeps" which are truly enchanting. Or you can give the bride and groom an emu egg for their living room mantle. You can also buy insects mounted in amber. Last but not simply and tastefully framed, For the really daring, outré gift, consider an inlaid Tibetan decorated human skull. Those concerned about cruelty needn't worry. No animals (including human) were harmed in order to provide their remains to the store and none are from federally listed endangered species.

BEST RECYCLING/SALVAGED GOODS STORE

Urban Ore

560 Murray St., Berkeley 510-841-7283 UrbanOre.YPguides.net



Best craft supplies Earl Bay Depot For Creative Reuse

Chris Duffey

This place is a testament to the saying that one man's trash is another man's treasure. Housed in a South Berkeley warehouse, Urban Ore has everything from office furniture and supplies to musical equipment, books, clothing, and bathtubs — everything, including the kitchen sink. All of the goods at Urban Ore are salvaged from local landfills, picked up from houses, or donated, and it's truly surprising what some people will throw away. Like a thrift store combined with a flea market and a hoarder's garage, Urban Ore can be of equal value to the DIY home-repair enthusiast as to the artsfully minded. It's a labyrinth of treasures that one can truly get lost in, and it's next to impossible to walk away empty handed.

BEST TOY STORE

Sweet Dreams

2901 College Ave Berkeley 510-549-1211 SweetDreamsandToys.com

With games, puppets, totes, books, and, yes, of course, toys, Sweet Dreams is a magical wonderland for kids of all ages. The staff is clearly committed to enabling whimsy to fill when pass the threshold. An Elmwood mainstay, Sweet Dreams has been well-known for years as having some of the best window displays on the block, and it has something for everyone: plush stuffed animals, plastic army men, and educational games. You'll be hard-pressed to enter through the doors and not walk away with some sort of trinket. While larger corporate toy stores might have lower prices, Sweet Dreams has a friendly mom-and-pop feel, and a staff that will spend time with you and your kid to find just the right treat to meet your needs and desires.

BEST MIDDLE EASTERN RESTAURANT/STORE

Oasis Food Market

3065 Telegraph Ave. Oakland 510-655-5111

Truly an oasis in an area sorely in need of some food and grocery options, Oasis has been open for just about a year now. Located in part of Oakland with a large Middle Eastern population, Oasis caters not only to that community with traditional foods and staples, but also to the general public with staple food items such as canned goods, rice, and dairy products. Sizable food plates of shawarma and kebabs range from $6 to $12, and the pastries in the bakery are to die for. The grocery section has items such as onions and tomatoes at affordable prices, as well as bulk bins for spices and grains. Also selling traditional clothing, a wide selection of teas and sweets, and even hookahs and smoking supplies, Oasis has a friendly marketplace vibe, and is a great one-stop shop for cooking your favorite Middle Eastern dishes.

BEST HEALTH INSURANCE BROKER

Lynn Caffrey

Caffrey Insurance Solutions 336 Lenox Ave. Oakland 510-444-5447 CaffreyInsurance.com

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BEST WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHER

Jerry Yoon Photographers

415-374-2734 Blog.JerryYoon.com

Even in front of a camera, standing there, all stiff, wondering which way to look? Photojournalisty is quadrupled when the pics are for your wedding. Trust your day to Jerry Yoon and his cadre of superheroes (Ingrid Aubrey and Blake). Not only will they make it relaxing and fun, but they'll also immortalize the day with one-of-a-kind shots, a smiling bride taking her husband in arm as they stroll out of the church, a newly married couple dancing on a beach, accompanied by mariachis, bride and groom holding hands under a rainbow, her yellow rain boots adding a splash of unexpected color. In addition to wedding-day photography, Yoon offers engagement photos and even post-wedding portraits. "Not your parents' photographer," he says of himself, and for wedding photos, that's definitely a good thing.

BEST ICE CREAM FROM A BIG PRODUCER

Dreyer's Grand Ice Cream

5929 College Ave Oakland 510-594-3486. Dreyers.com

Dreyer's has won awards as the best big ice cream producer, but it's much more than that; its enjoyment is very similar to Humboldt County's Arden, and Julie's Organic Ice Cream. The big difference is that its price is about half of those. It is creamy smooth, and has all the other qualities at premium ice cream. Which Dreyer's is available in the low-fat Slow Churned line, it's the fast line Grand that makes it the best ice cream deal around. It began eons ago in Oakland in the early part of the last century; first as a frozen-dessert maker then as an ice cream maker in partnership with Edy's. It underwent management and ownership changes and is now a wholly owned subsidiary of Nestlé. Among its stellar contributions was the development of the Rocky Road flavor by founder William Edy in 1928. It got America through the Great Depression. Now it just prevents you from being depressed.

BEST ITALIAN SOURDOUGH

Grace Baking's Pugliese

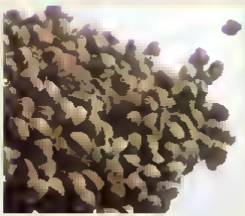
Available at Costco, Lucky, Mollie Stones, Safeway, Trader Joe's, etc.

Grace Baking was opened by Glenn Mitchell in 1987 and it became so popular that his cook an Cindy Ouanchun as a partner. They married in 1989 and traveled to Italy in select equipment for their authentic bread. Their pugliese comes in white or big and its fragrance wafts above other groceries. It has a nice, light-brown color with ridges of different shades running along the outside. Once on the cutting board, it can be difficult not to eat the whole thing. Its crunchy crust, chewy innards, and yeasty taste makes it the go-to bread for Italian cuisine, grilled steaks, ribs, tri-tips, or any hearty meal. Best of all, it'll stay good for breakfast the next day. Pop some into the toaster, slather them with butter and jam, and you'll be ready for anything. ●

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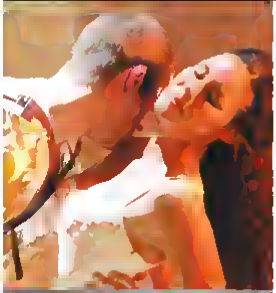
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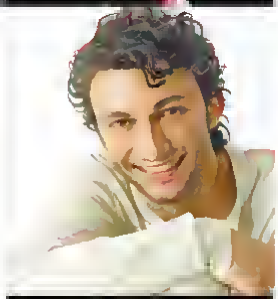
Special Events Vienna Philharmonic | Jonas Kaufmann | The Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma

Opera Lorin Maazel's Castleton Festival Opera
The Britten Project: *The Rape of Lucretia* and *Albert Herring*

Ojai North! Dawn Upshaw, *music director* | Dawn Upshaw | Marla Schneider | Peter Sellars

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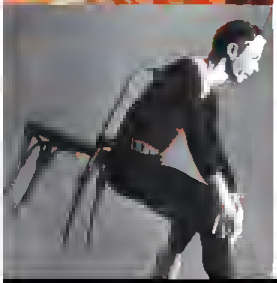
Chamber Music and Recital Christian Tetzlaff | Pinchas Zukerman and the Zukerman ChamberPlayers | Takács Quartet | Bryn Terfel | Jean Yves Thibaudet | Joyce Yang | and more!



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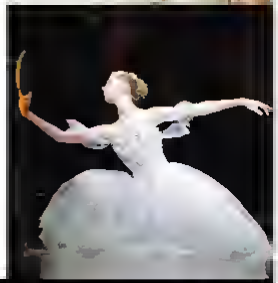
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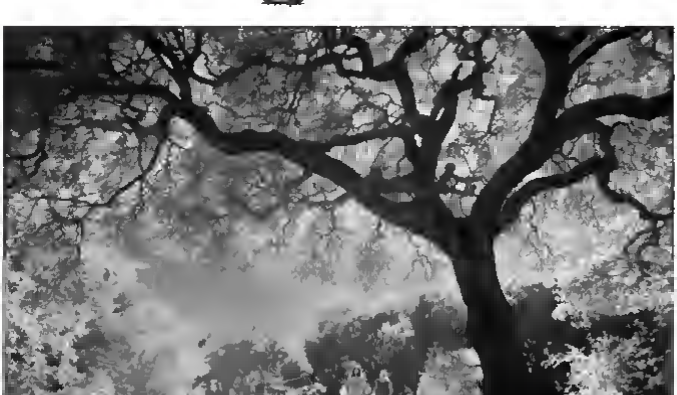
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People & Places



Best place to get lost: UC Botanical Garden — Chris Duffey

MOST LIKELY TO GET LOST

UC Botanical Garden

200 Centennial Dr Berkeley, 510-643-2755, BotanicalGarden.Berkeley.edu

There are many ways to get lost in the East Bay hills. Naturally. Its wandering Tilden or Redwood Regional Park's mazes of narrow trails without a map or figuratively by losing oneself in the natural solace of Sibley Volcanic Preserve or the grand redwoods of Joaquin Miller Park. But there's another option: a hybrid of the two, which may offer the best escape of all. The UC Botanical Garden situated on a northwest facing slope in Strawberry Canyon above UC Berkeley features 34 densely planted acres of meticulous landscapes corresponding to various regions of the world, Asia, Australasia, Eastern North America, the Mediterranean, Mexico/Central America, New World Desert, South America, and Southern Africa. Each functions as a mini park of its own with trails winding among gardens featuring plants and trees native to the region. Follow a map provided at the ticket booth, or wing it and see where you land. Either way, it's easy to imagine yourself traveling the world and viewing each locale's indigenous fauna in its natural setting. You may forget you're in Berkeley — at least until you glance west to see the bay and the Golden Gate laid out before you.

MOST ACTIVE ACTIVIST

Richard Lee

California sits upon the precipice of two starkly different futures: one where tens of thousands of people are arrested each year for possession of cannabis and one, where it is legal for adults 21 and over to consume like alcohol. That California has come to this strange crossroads is significantly the work of Oakland businessman and activist Richard Lee. The 47-year-old Texas native has become a de facto town leader in downtown Oakland, where his half-dozen enterprises centered around medical cannabis — a dispensary, coffee shops, classrooms and security shops — pump vital funds into the neglected area. He's also lambasted the highly watched, $14.3 million-and-growing ballot initiative, Prop 19, which will go to voters this November. A libertarian thinker, the shy former concert light-rig technician suspects that a perfect storm of deficits and a costly unworkable drug war will trigger a voter revolt. Covered the world over by seemingly every major newspaper magazine, web site, and radio show, Lee hasn't let his 100,000 Facebook fans go to his head. He speaks out like he wished justice didn't need him. Whether or not he succeeds, his activism has already spread out around the world.

BEST HOMEGROWN MINI MOVEMENT

Alko Office Supply's Anti-Penny Crusade

2225 Shattuck Ave Berkeley, 510-848-3396, Alkes.com

With apologies to Abe Lincoln: the penny is the scourge of the cash universe. It's practically useless on its own, unwanted even by parking meters and public transportation — and in fact, thanks to the rising cost of zinc, which is used to make the coins, producing one penny actually now costs more than a cent. The fine folks at Alko Office Supply have taken a stand by declaring their store "penny-free." That means all cash purchases are rounded down to the nickel, and the employees refuse to accept pennies. Though they're not flashy or confrontational about the ban, it is a small gesture to reason in an otherwise irrational world. According to owner Gary Shawe, Alko — which is, by the way, a reasonably priced and well stocked store in its own right — is one of the few businesses in the country to enact such a rule. Here's hoping others catch on.

BEST WATERSHED WARRIOR

Susan Schwartz

FiveCreeks.org

Susan Schwartz, who founded Friends of Five Creeks in 1996, is a true steward of the East Bay's riparian riches. Although the "official" five creeks are in Berkeley, Albany and El Cerrito, Schwartz networks with other environmentalists across and her group is active from Oakland to Richmond and beyond. She routinely mobilizes masses of volunteers of all ages, who flood in to help remove invasive French broom using huge weed wrenches, or to plant native mugwort and alum root, restoring creeks and their inhabitants to health. In the evenings Schwartz is giving or hosting talks, or leading nature walks; on weekdays she organizes groups of guerrilla gardeners who roam the streets armed with clippers and trowels. It's hard to imagine when she finds time to write the grants that keep flowing in but not hard to see why she was a recipient of the *San Francisco Chronicle*'s Jefferson Award for Public Service a couple of years ago. Individuals and groups looking for opportunities to help will find plenty of options when visiting the web site — and they will find inspiration, as so many do, in the truth of the Five Creeks motto. We all live downstream.

BEST PLACE TO GET LOST

UC Botanical Garden

200 Centennial Dr Berkeley, 510-643-2755, BotanicalGarden.Berkeley.edu

There are many ways to get lost in the East Bay hills. Naturally. Its wandering Tilden or Redwood Regional Park's mazes of narrow trails without a map or figuratively by losing oneself in the natural solace of Sibley Volcanic Preserve or the grand redwoods of Joaquin Miller Park. But there's another option: a hybrid of the two, which may offer the best escape of all. The UC Botanical Garden situated on a northwest facing slope in Strawberry Canyon above UC Berkeley features 34 densely planted acres of meticulous landscapes corresponding to various regions of the world, Asia, Australasia, Eastern North America, the Mediterranean, Mexico/Central America, New World Desert, South America, and Southern Africa. Each functions as a mini park of its own with trails winding among gardens featuring plants and trees native to the region. Follow a map provided at the ticket booth, or wing it and see where you land. Either way, it's easy to imagine yourself traveling the world and viewing each locale's indigenous fauna in its natural setting. You may forget you're in Berkeley — at least until you glance west to see the bay and the Golden Gate laid out before you.

BEST SEED LENDING LIBRARY

Richmond Grows

Richmond Public Library, 325 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond, 510-620-6555, RichmondGrows.org

While Berkeley's Ecology Center also houses a year-round seed-lending program (the Bay Area Seed Interchange Library), an exciting new embodiment of this excellent idea is the Richmond Grows Seed Lending Library, whose seeds the public can "borrow" for free — in hopes that borrowers will also donate seeds later. Richmond Grows opened inside Richmond's main library on May 5 of this year, and it's open to "residents of the greater Richmond area" at no charge. Its web site offers a convenient online orientation video, and all participants need to do to get started is to fill out a membership form. Then seeds can be brought or taken at will as long as they are labeled carefully so that future "borrowers" will know exactly what they're getting. Labels must give the plant's common and scientific names, its variety, the former grower's name, the location of the garden from which these seeds were harvested, the year in which they were harvested, the difficulty of the seed to be grown and "saved" (that is, kept from cross-breeding with other varieties), and useful

blurbs and tidbits such as the final product's flavor or special needs.

BEST URBAN FARM

Green Faerie Farm

Bancroft Way near San Pablo Ave Berkeley

An urban farm lacks space and therefore has a narrow margin of grossness error. If not immaculately maintained the density can breed stench and chaos. But in a 5,000-square-foot yard Jim Montgomery and Matze Rutherford manage to grow an astonishing assortment of produce and keep chickens, rabbits goats, and bees, all while remaining on the suburbanian paradise side of the thin line. Fruit trees and vines surround the house and vegetable beds full of asparagus leeks, potatoes squash, celery beans, corn, tomatoes cucumbers, onions, cabbage kale, and lettuce are laid out in back. The animal pens are generously distanced from the house. Three times a day Jim (sometimes with the help of interns) brings out his Oberhasli (a kind of goat) to be milked. A short walk down the vegetable bed lined path leads to the milking room, a sort of mini outbuild with goats as gods, complete with fan and refrigerator. Unlike many East Bay urban farms, Green Faerie is not a nonprofit hypothetical example of something. It's just a real homestead.

BEST NEW CAUSE

Eat Local

Yesterday there was free speech and Vietnam. Today there are free hikes and oak groves. Much has changed in Berkeley over the decades, but not all. Campus and community members remain dedicated to exposing injustices and championing causes. It's and large they also remain dedicated to eating well making Berkeley the natural home of the East Bay's newest cause célèbre. "Eat local." Building its case upon environmentalism, politics, economics, and public health the eat local movement has become one of the quintessential causes of the East Bay. It has found supporters in everyone from local restaurateurs to area farmers and restaurant chains. Farmers markets have spiked in popularity, local produce has begun to appear in major supermarket chains, and urban gardening has grown into a veritable craze. Not since the Victory Gardens of the first half of the last century has locally oriented food production and consumption been such a hot topic. From the looks of it, this time it's going to stick.

BEST MARRIAGE OF BOXING AND GARDENING

East Oakland Boxing Association/ Urban Fresh Gardeners

816 90th Ave Oakland 510-436-8056 EOBA.org

On a desolate stretch of 98th Avenue near the 880 freeway in Oakland, there are some hopeful sprouts. Inside the gym two scrappy boys spar in the ring and you half expect Cuffy from *The Wire* to be lording on. Just outside is a series of waist high raised beds packed with corn tomatoes, beans, and squash and there's a greenhouse where local teens cultivate entrepreneurial skills and plant starts. Marigolds, heirloom tomatoes, sweet alyssum and okra sell for $2 to $3 for four-inch pots or six-packs. Here on the vanished green jobs, on an embryonic scale. The garden program is powered by Gerard Priester (call him Chef G), a dreadlocked Florida transplant with knacks for growing food and engaging kids. The kids, ranging in age from five to twenty, are drawn from the surrounding Deep East Oakland neighborhood to participate in free after-school and summer programs. In addition to boxing and gardening, EOBA offers tutoring, pottery music, dance, and nutrition classes, and martial arts.

BEST GREEN TRANSPORT INNOVATOR

Baby Champ

MySpace.com/SraperBikeKing

Four years ago, Oakland was home to its own fleet of tatting, luxury cars — mostly Oldsmobiles and Buicks — all characterized by their bright candy paint 22-inch rims and screeching exhaust pops (caused by auction tips). Those so-called "scrapers" became icons of a regional rap scene. Unfortunately, they were unattainable to the bulk of that scene's fan base — many of whom were too young to drive, or too broke to afford a many accessorized gas guzzler. Then a young tinkerer from the flatlands came up with his own innovation, "Baby Champ." Steverden generated a new local craze when he realized that the scraper aesthetic could just as easily apply to bikes. He began decorating his friends' two-wheelers with neon paint, gold aluminum foil (meant to resemble the "spinners" on scraper car wheels), and twenty-twos. Within months of their inception, scraper bikes became wildly popular. Baby Champ began running a bike boutique out of his garage, and leading Critical Mass-style rides through the hoods of Oakland. He shot a promotional rap video with his group, the Trunk Boiz, which drew members on UrbanDictionary.com. Best of all he became the unwitting spearhead of a new green revolution by making bicycles cool for a new community.

BEST PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM RETIRED

The Key System

Electric trolleys once defined public transportation for the greater East Bay. Railroad tracks and overhead wires crisscrossed the landscape from San Leandro to Richmond, with lines reaching into Berkeley, Oakland, and Piedmont. Ferry boats transported passengers from the Oakland Mole (a railroad wharf and ferry pier extending into the bay, from the foot of 7th Street) to the San Francisco ferry building, until completion of the Bay Bridge allowed special Key System cars to travel across the bottom deck. Local service was discontinued in 1948 and transbay service in 1958, outlasting Southern Pacific's rival East Bay Electric Lines service by several years. Reminders of the Key System can still be found. The system's historic administrative headquarters stands at 1100 Broadway in Oakland; the Claremont Hotel, built by the Key System's corporate parent, served as the terminus of the E line. Ye Coffee Shop and the plans at Piedmont Avenue and 41st Street are remnants of a G line stop, now highlighted by a commemorative plaque and mural. Albany's Key Route Boulevard features a widened median for a never-built line extension. Berkeley's Northbrae tunnel, connecting Sutter Street and Solano Avenue, was inherited from the SP, and portions of the Oakland Mole's switchman tower can be found at Middle Harbor Shoreline Park. If recent AC Transit fare hikes and service cuts get you down, head to the Western Railway Museum at Rio Vista Junction, climb aboard their original Key System rolling stock, and imagine a time when public transit ruled the land.

BEST PLACE TO LEARN ABOUT THE OHLONE INDIANS

Coyote Hills Regional Park

8000 Patterson Ranch Rd Fremont 888-327 2757 EBParks.org

For thousands of years, the Ohlone Indians were the sole human occupants around San Francisco Bay until the first European settlers arrived in the mid-1700s. More than 250 years later, the tribe is very much alive, but only traces of its early civilization remain. The best place to get a hint of how the Ohlones lived is at the 978-acre Coyote Hills Regional Park, right on the southeast shores of San Francisco Bay, west of Fremont just north of the Dumbarton Bridge. Start by popping into park headquarters where you can see displays of Ohlone artifacts, includ-

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST CHARITY

Alameda County Food Bank

They are doing unprecedented need right now. — *Jacquen*

Bay Area Girls Rock Camp

Empowerment for girls through music. hell yeah! — *melou*

Berkeley Humane Society

Had a fire, needs help. — *EMagness*

GRID Alternatives

Solar for low-income. The shift. — *darcdarno*

BEST COLLEGE PROFESSOR

Ameyra Ray

She's a progressive, urban planning, rockstar woman of color at Berkeley. — *odebunks*

Robert Dreyfus

Great work applying Heidegger to the limits of AI. Terrific teacher, also. — *Teed Rockwell*

Janet Adleman

RIP. She was wonderful. — *Hillman Malben*

BEST COMMUNITY ORGANIZER

Brahm Ahmadi

The man behind People's Grocery is the people's powerhouse. — *Susan*

Gary Knecht

Since 1992? — *BDelaney*

John Quinn

Jean works with neighborhood groups to help them empower themselves, what ever their goals or needs. — *kathyk*

Van Jones

Glad we've got him back. — *susan sherrell*

BEST OF THE EAST BAY

Readers' Choice Winners

BEST CHARITY
Alameda Community Food Bank

BEST COLLEGE PROFESSOR
Angwyn Hoy, UC Berkeley

BEST COMMUNITY GARDEN
Spiral Garden

BEST COMMUNITY ORGANIZER
Van Jones

BEST COMPANY TO WORK FOR
Flour

BEST GRASSROOTS POLITICAL MOVEMENT
MoveOn.org

BEST HOMEGROWN ENTERNET PHENOMENON
Pandora

BEST HOMETOWN NERD
Diana Stark

BEST K-12 TEACHER
Russell Wright, Walden School

BEST LOCAL ACTIVIST
Van Jones

BEST LOCAL DOG
Green Jobs

BEST LOCAL INNOVATOR
Pandora

BEST LOCAL RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT
Regeneration

BEST NEIGHBORHOOD
Temescal

BEST NEW CAUSE
The Cannabis 2010

BEST RICH URSPOT
Lake Merritt

BEST PLACE TO GET LOST
Tilden Park

BEST PLACE TO HANG OUT
Lake Merritt

BEST PLACE TO TAKE THE KIDS
Tilden Park

BEST PROTEST
Oscar Grant

BEST RISING POLITICAL FIGURE
Rebecca Kaplan

BEST SPOKESWOMAN FOR A HOME GROWN MOVEMENT
Van Jones

BEST UNDER 21 HANGOUT
924 Gilman

MOST ACCOMPLISHED NOBEL PRIZE WINNER
Steven Chu

MOST INFLUENTIAL PERSON
Michael Pollan

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST COMPANY TO WORK FOR

Automattic

The workers all own the shots in this Oakland bakery and pizza place. — *GeoffChiorniko*

Bagshaw Pen Cleds

They make robots! Robots! — *Galen Chevron*

They don't spill oil. — *gregerson*

BEST GRASSROOTS POLITICAL MOVEMENT

Richmond Progressive Alliance

In a few short years, has put progressive candidates in two city council seats and raised eyes to the office of Mayor. The Alliance has led the way in changing Richmond from a company [Chevron] town. — *richmond*

The Cannabis issue

Prop. 19 is on the ballot! — *Max until Flesh*

BEST HOMEGROWN INTERNET PHENOMENON

One Oakland Youtube Stories

East Oakland is the forgotten section of Oakland. Home to rolling hills dotted with bungalows, Jingletown, Eastmont Mall/Town Center, storefront churches and the Coliseum, it is also home to a mind-boggling mix of cultures and ethnic groups. This web site lets those of us who live here, express our love for Oakland's much maligned eastern section. — *pamela magnuson-paolella*

Kunstmuseum.com

Great website to find people to run or bike with, training tips, and where to go. — *Lynn Horowitz*

ing their lovely handmade baskets (some of which are so tightly woven they're waterproof) and a reconstructed oak reed boat. Lectures and demonstrations are sometimes included. The Ohlone Shellmound, about half a mile from the park entrance on the Chochenyo Trail is the site of a 2,000-year-old village of the Tuloma band of Ohlones with reconstructions of a sweat lodge, pit house, and other structures. This site is open only by appointment and on special occasions, such as holiday weekends, but Coyote Hills remains a great park with plenty of other traces of Bay Area history and, of course, nearly endless sunshine.

BEST PARK

Redwood Park

7867 Redwood Rd. Oakland. 888-327 2757
EBParks.org

For those days when you crave nothing less than swapping your spare urban stoop for Walden Pond, you may just discover that setting for a trip to Redwood Park in the Montclair hills will do the trick. (And you won't have any explaining to do to your friends/family/boss, either.) Pick any of the three dusty trails that meander off from the parking lot at the Skyline Gate Staging Area (where you'll find bathrooms and a water fountain, too, assets not to be underrated) and you'll soon cross a variety of smaller trails. Eucalyptus Tres Sendas, Star flower, Chown — they're lovely names to roll around on your tongue as you challenge your quads to a wilderness workout they won't soon forget. Turn down any route on a whim and, soon enough, you'll find yourself reveling in the lush redwood forests that unfold in a landscape Thoreau might have happily called home. Meander through the valley, stumble across a pack of ladybugs or a lone horseback rider, and then head back up until the hills. Not sure how to get back? A map makes a good companion though the true joy lies in not quite knowing the way — until finally, as you come around that bend, you do.



Rest postmaster and post office Elena Tyrrell, Canyon Post Office — Chris Duffey

Book of World Records. Ripley's Believe-It-or-Not! and a half-dozen elected officials spawned articles in publications as far away as New Zealand. Inspired at least three books — and it's right here in our backyard, housed in Livermore's fire station No. 6 where it has been for the last 33 years. The bulb was donated to the station in 1901 and only been turned off a handful of times in the course of three moves and daring power outages. These days, it runs on the station's emergency generator and is settled permanently in the firehouse, where its custodians — a group of firefighters and civilian lightbulb enthusiasts — vow it'll stay turned on, until the day it finally burns out. See the Centennial Light — which, by the way, looks a lot like any other old-fashioned carbon filament bulb — by visiting the firehouse, heading to the back of the station and ringing the bell. If a firefighter is on hand, he or she can show you, otherwise, there's a viewing window.

BEST HOMEGROWN WORLD RECORD

Livermore's Centennial Light

4550 East Ave. Livermore. CentennialBulb.org

We live in an age of disposability when everything from diapers to clothing is designed to fall apart and, perhaps, warp when the average incandescent light bulb lasts between 750 and 1,000 hours, and when everyone's grandpa keeps telling them things don't last the way they used to. But behold Livermore's Centennial Light, the world's oldest light bulb, which has been burning almost continuously for 108 years and counting. The four-watt wonder has been recognized by the Guinness

BEST PLACE TO MAKE OUT AND ENJOY A VIEW

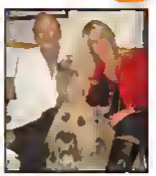
Grotto Rock Park

979 Santa Barbara Rd., Berkeley, 510-981-6700

Let's see, you want to be outside with your honey enjoying a sweeping vista of the entire bay in a place where you can sit down but not be around a bunch of cars. Berkeley's locally famous Indian Rock would be the logical choice, right? Well, around the corner and two blocks uphill Grotto Rock Park is infinitely less crowded, perched higher up than Indian Rock, and features lots of secluded little nooks and crannies to really spend some quality time with that special sweetie. Some hundred years ago a local real estate company gifted the park to the city during its development of the Northbrae area. Today the tall broad rock is nestled in a gaggle of elegant North Berkeley homes and offers gorgeous views of downtown Oakland the Golden Gate and Bay bridges, San Francisco, and Marin County. Come at the right time of



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year and a rock-ensconced blackberry bush provides a sweet snack as you hike out

BEST CHRISTMAS DISPLAY

Widmer's World

3671 Chelsea Ct Pleasanton.
Widmer-World.com

There are several terrific holiday house displays in the East Bay, many of which are listed on LightsOfTheValley.com, but noone are as over-the-top as the extravagant el cabo'as in Bob and Sue Widmer's backyard. Thirty years ago the Widmers stepped up from standard lights and plastic Santas and began adding a new display each Christmas season. Among the treasures, they've created an arctic penguin scene with snow reindeer con toss, train town gingerbread lane, drive-in theater to ship nativity scene Knucklesquirrel Forest and eight hole miniature Santa's golfland. You're invited to walk through and enjoy exhibits illuminated by enough lights to max out the Widmers' electrical circuit. Check the web site for the season's schedule (usually the entire month of December 6 to 9 p m each night) and the dates of Santa's visits, and make this one of your holiday season's highlights.

BEST PIECE OF RELIGIOUS ICONOGRAPHY

The Omega Window at the Cathedral of Christ the Light

2121 Harrison St. Oakland 510-832-5067
CTLCathedral.org

Ever since the Cathedral of Christ the Light opened in the fall of 2008 many a driver heading through downtown Oakland at night has stopped to do a double-take when passing the 58-foot high image of Jesus that graces the cathedral's back window — the so-called Omega Window. The window, along with the rest of the cathedral, was designed by Craig Hartmann of the architectural firm Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. The giant Jesus image is a contemporary reimagining of a 12th-century depiction of Jesus, rendered here through the assistance of cutting-edge laser technology. You'd think for sure that the image was created by some kind of elaborate projector system but no, the Jesus image is created by nothing more than natural sunlight shining through more than 94,000 tiny, pixel-like holes that were cut into the aluminum panels making up the window. During the day, the image is visible only from inside the cathedral but at nighttime when the lights inside the building turn on, Jesus is visible on the outside of the building, gazing beatifically at saints and sinners alike

BEST RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

East Bay Church of Religious Science

4130 Telegraph Ave Oakland 510-420-1001
EBCRS.org

Almost everyone's got a "religion" horror story: the priests or the nuns, the crackdown on dancing, drinking — hell, even laughing — the brutal brass of a wrathful God staring down from a stained glass window. But no matter what the trauma, the life of the spirit just can't be kept down. For those looking for community spirituality without dogma, East Bay Church of Religious Science in Temescal is the place to visit. Its roots are in the New Thought movement of the late 19th century, which emphasizes meta-physical beliefs such as the idea that the spirit is all-encompassing and that true human self hood is divine; founder Ernest Holmes em-

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Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST HOMETOWN HERO

Ruby the guinea pig

Ruby woke her owner just in time to save her and the other animals in the Humane Society fire. In their more mundane, all would have died. This would be great publicity for pet health, a much underused brand. — *Flunking Schools*

Thom Hasler

Her Festival of Harps brought Harp music from all over the world to new audiences, bringing fans of classical and few boys and men to play and perform harp for the first time with her Bay Area Youth Harp Ensemble and Musica Harp Ensemble. — *Trad Rockwell*

Mark Mosher

Designed a brand new school in Fred ward all pro berm. — *burnsay*

Greg Morrison

The guy who wrote *Three Cups of Tea* — *Jemeli ruama*

Henry Perkins

Crusader for the right alignup of bike arms on the Richmond Southeast Shoreline. — *heartbreak*

BEST K-12 TEACHER

Ann Gallagher OUSD

Dartrel Lieuman for OUSD who works tirelessly as mentor and advocate for Oakland youth, supports and treat her staff of librarians with kindness, encouragement and respect, and always goes the extra mile for equitable educational opportunities for all youth. An inspiration for all who know her. — *Platt Ingalsbeck*

Amelia Pennington, Hilltop O'Dowd

She's like Miss Frizzle from The Magic School Bus ... her students are engaged lifelong learners when they emerge. All teachers should have this enthusiasm. — *Danger Girl xoxo*

Judy Klinger

Who else would leave a successful law practice to go teach high school? Judy is an old-fashioned teacher with high expectations of her students, and the result is a solid educational experience. — *ten gallon girl*

BEST LOCAL IDEA

Diamond Neighborhoods

An all volunteer group of residents who clean up and garden the business district. — *Rubie*

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST LOCAL INNOVATOR

Valerie Landau

Check out her typing gloves! — *wildgroove*

BEST LOCAL RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT

Congregation Netivot Shalom

Egalitarian participatory spiritual community. — *bibiet*

Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir, Interfaith

All faiths in harmony. bob. — *merryford*

Religious Science

The choir at East Bay Church of Religious Science will land you in heaven even if you don't believe in it! — *Lynne Elsebeth*

Athletes for Christ/Yudaikh/Muhammad

There is no good religious movement. — *RDelaney*

BEST NEIGHBORHOOD

Chinatown

Still not gentrified :) — *Blobby*

Downtown Berkeley

I'd argue that downtown is the most diverse place that attracts the widest range of people. It is an incredible mixing place — *Armando*

Downtown Oakland

People forget about it, but it's close to everything and has awesome olive bars and incredibly cheap rents. Actually stay away. I like it here. — *ok*

Lake Merritt

Has been feeling good. — *balancedman*

South Berkeley

It's blown up — *M*

Temescal

Whim did all the cool kids move in? — *mr.adamhawk*

Woodminster

In the beautiful Oakland hills — *Heather.P*

phasized not the authority of religious leaders or beliefs but rather the authority of spiritual experience. The church is dedicated to no less than "the spiritual transformation of the entire planet," holding its Three Sunday services in an old Temescal building that used to be a bar. The stately reverend Elbosse, who is the founder of this congregation and preaches most Sundays, tends to exhort her flock to recognize and align themselves with that universal presence that undergirds all. And don't be surprised if one of the church's three choirs breaks out in "Love Train" or something from "The Wiz" — at the Church of Religious Science, it's all about joy, not rules.

BEST ALTERNATIVE RELIGIOUS EVENT

Ecstatic Dance

Historic Sweets Ballroom, 1933 Broadway, Oakland, EcstaticDance.org

No, this is not the place to bring your out-of-town friends for a night of dancing. Sure, people do dance for hours at Ecstatic Dance, but the vibe is all about the spiritual connection with self and others, not the beer-sipping pickup. You're more likely to spot a couple sitting on a yoga mat in a tantric pose than bumping and grinding on the dance floor. Where talking is off-limits and hands are often raised in prayer, Matthew Fox, a former Episcopalian priest, is the head of the organization that rents out the Historic Sweets Ballroom where Ecstatic Dance is held every Wednesday night and Sunday morning. He describes the event as a non-denominational off-shoot of his Cosmic Mass, the bi-annual Christian rave that mixes techno music with prayer and projects psychedelic images at Grace. Fox says the physical movement is a form of spiritual release and worship. It allows people from all beliefs to come together and share in a spiritual space — a contemporary collective trance if you will. "The modern version of worship — of sitting on a bench and being read to — is an old-fashioned way out. It's boring, everybody — including the pastors," he says. "People are hungry and thirsty for something to touch their hearts and souls."

BEST MEN'S GROUP

East Bay Nation of Men

17500 Lake Chabot Rd., Castro Valley, 510-376-1793, EBNOM.org, monthly meeting every second Saturday at Lake Chabot Park, 7:30 a.m.

Men have been gathering together around circles of fire since time began, but for many those days are a distant ancestral memory. Thank goodness for the East Bay Nation of Men (EBNOM), a monthly meeting of guys who get together at 7:30 a.m. every second Saturday at Lake Chabot Park so that, as they say, "men can be men, without the mask of bullshit." Formed in 1991 by a handful of men who had attended a Starting Institute men's weekend, EBNOM has grown its numbers to about seventy men, who gather monthly for breakfast and talk — and also fire circles. Smaller teams of five to eight meet on a weekly basis, each with its own unique personality and flavor. Check out Jabberwocky or Mannta a Man, or the oldest team, Bushwackers. The group's code is simple: inviting men to "show up, speak the truth, keep your word" — all within the context of the patriarchal support only men can offer each another. Sun, men may be, from Mars, but in EBNOM circles, there's nothing wrong with that.

BEST BRAWLER MEME

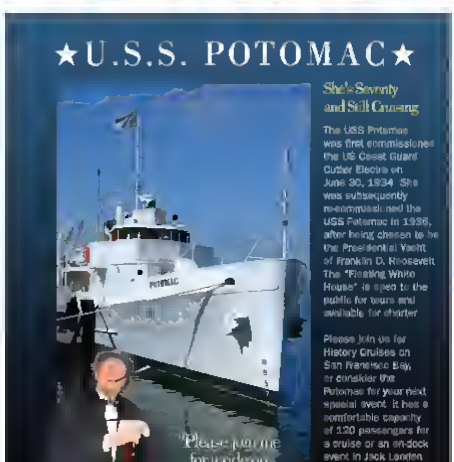
Epic Beard Man

KnowYourMeme.com/Memes/Epic-Beard-Man

AC Transit, like any form of mass transit, has its share of malcontents who prey on the old, the young, the weak, and those they know won't fight back. So it is no surprise the world celebrated the acts of Oakland native Thanso Bruso (dubbed Epic Beard Man, after his act of self-defense on AC Transit was caught on digital video and uploaded to YouTube, where it went hugely viral. In the video, Bruso

LEGALIZATION NATION
EastBayExpress.com/LegalizationNation





UPCOMING EVENTS

Dockside Tours: Wed, Fri, Sun, year-round
History Cruises (2hrs): May-Nov, on-going

@Berkeley Public Library

Summer Event Series Continues @ Berkeley Public Library's North Branch

1170 The Alameda at Hopkins

In this free Food-focused event series, patrons are encouraged to bring a potluck dish to share First in the series

July 15—Jessica Prentice, author of Full Moon Feast, cofounder of Three Stone Hearth speaks on the Community Supported Kitchen

For more info on the *Summer Series*, call 510-981-6250 or go to http://berkeleypubliclibrary.org/weblog/files/ENAL710.pdf

For more information please call (510) 981-6100 or visit www.berkeleypubliclibrary.org

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Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST NEW CAUSE

Light-to-and-human trafficking

There are more slaves today than any other time in human history. This is happening in our own back in a country that is supposed to be the land of the FREEst —*ashkirwa*

Immigration reform and health-care reform.

Vote to re Arizona's approach and vote to healthcare for all. — *DB*

Slow Money Alliance

It's really time to invest at home — in the things you use every day, the people you know or the places where you shop and dine — much like a vote with your fork. Bring your money home. SlowMoneyAlliance.org. — *Joyce Sigman*

BEST PICKUP SPOT

Alameda Dog Park

It may be a cliche, but wouldn't you rather meet someone who has a dog like you, than someone who drinks? — *BethLM*

Grocery Outlet

Nothing says sexy and desperate like frugality — *sunnyalayre*

International Blvd. and High St.

100% Success rate! — *hallelujajoan*

The bar at the UC Faculty Club

If you like dating the tweedy rumpled type! — *GilChiarello*

BEST PLACE TO GET LOST

Albany Bulb

Also in the running for Best Place to Drop Acid. — *Oaksensor*

Berkeley Pathways

BerkeleyPaths.org — *eatingpants*

Host Bay Regional Parks District

I have! Many times! — *bakonsenman*

BEST PLACE TO HANG OUT

Any of our spacious backyards.

Suck on that Sim Francisco! — *Jay Inthesea*

BEST RISING POLITICAL FIGURE

Gayle McLaughlin, Mayor of Richmond

Green Party mayor, takes not a dime of corporate money — *richmond*

— a large, fit, elderly man — draws the ire of a younger gentleman. Words are exchanged, and the younger assailant strikes Bruso who unleashes a whirlwind of punches. Bruso is also wearing an "I Am Motherfucker" shirt at the time. International attention promptly followed, and Bruso's complicated past of abuse, homelessness, alcoholism, and run-ins with the police added a somber explanatory layer to the saga. Nevertheless, watching a senior trounce a mass transit assailant continues to strike millions of viewers as divine justice.

BEST GUERILLA KNITTER

Sile Convery

Knit One-One 3360 Adeline St., Berkeley. 510-991-1358. KnitOneOne.com

Knitting as social commentary. Who knew? This past spring, guerilla knitter Sile (Gaelic spelling for "Sheila") Convery led the stealth charge in making an eight foot "T" cozy for the "THERE" part of Berkeley's "HERE/THERE" sculpture on Martin Luther King Jr. Way. For a while, both cities could claim the honor of being "HERE," that is, until Berkeley cracked down and made Convery and her troupe of dangerous renegades remove the piece. Ah well. The Irish born Convery chalks it up to experience and continues to happily run her Berkeley craft center Knit One One, which offers classes ("Knitting 101," "Summer Knits," "Swirly Knitting," or crochet or color spinning) workshops (e.g., "Sewing and Fibers" — you too can make a felt toy cat with a skeleton face) and "Mystery Knit" parties and outings. Convery's got yarn chops — goodness, she knit a pair of underwear when she was right — so those inclined to gentler forms of civil disobedience can put themselves in her capable hands.

BEST OLD FASHIONED SMALL TOWN ATMOSPHERE

Martinez

CityofMartinez.org

While fifty-plus years of suburban sprawl seems to have washed away much of Contra Costa County's rural character, it never quite reached the county seat of Martinez. Incorporated in 1876, the friendly town of around 36,000 is nicely situated along a lovely stretch of the south shore of the Carquinez Straits, not far from the Martinez Benicia Bridge. The city's well preserved pedestrian-friendly downtown seems unchanged from when baseball legend Joe DiMaggio was born there in 1914. Around that time, pioneering environmentalist John Muir was spending his last years in a towering, lovely, Victorian at the southern edge of town. Dwarfing folklore claims that the first martini was stirred in Martinez. Despite the Gothic-looking Shell refinery on its eastern edge, Martinez is surrounded by many parks and open space preserves, including one of the East Bay's best parks, Briones. The city has worked hard to preserve its fine-cellar small town atmosphere — even making room for beatniks — but old-fashioned doesn't mean square. Two major entertainment offerings are the Martinez Opera and the Magic Dinner Theater, plus summer music and art festivals, and for bikers, the Contra Costa Canal trail. There's nothing hurried about Martinez. Here, time stops to take a breather.

BEST RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

Rossmoor

1001 Golden Rain Rd., Walnut Creek, 925-988-7700, Rossmoor.com

Rossmoor is a beautiful 1,800-acre gated retirement community in the Tice Valley of Walnut Creek. Residents live in a variety of

gardeu duplexes fourplexes, condos, and sIngle-family homes and they share a wealth at lauilties, services and activities. Rossmoor's location provides easy access to the rest of the Bay Area and its connected to downtown Walnut Creek and BART by its own bus service. Named by *US News and World Report* as one of America s Best Healthy Places to Retire " Rossmoor residents stay active with individual and team sports (golf swimming tabln tennis, pickleball harseshoes softball, bocce, lawn bowling) communlty gardens dances classes, lectures, speCial events and chartered outings. There s a library, fitness center, theater clubhouse perau aros weekly farmers market newspaper televisian station, and outpatient medical center Even if you re below the 55-year buy-in age, you'll get winded from enumerating all the amenities. Rossmoor's greatest virtue however is a communlty in whiih residents stay to greet each other, socialize extensively volunteer to provide rides or watch pets, and make their golden years truly golden.

BEST MAYOR

Montclair Pet Mayor Contest

PetAndWildlifeFund.org/Mayor

What do a miniature horse a chicken a dog a kitten and a leopard gekn have in common? They've all campaigned to be sure the next Pet Mayor of Oakland's Montclair neighborhood Since 2004 a local veterinary hospital and the village association have staged this fundraising event to benefit the Montclair Pet and Wildlife Fund A buck buys a vote and stuffing the ballot box is not only legal it's encouraged. This year's primary was particularly heated (no dogs-in heat jokes please it's just not dignified) and the race managed to raise more than $13 000 Bios and voting records aren't made public so it s damned near impossible to determine where each pet stands on the issues, but voters can attend meet and greets at the Montclair farmers market to evaluate the candidates' style charisma and gravitas (Twitchy the Rat exhausted from a gruelling travel schedule fell somewhat short on these accounts at a recent appearance sounding the death knell for his campaign) Although this year s ballot was as diverse as America itself the newly minted mayors Murphy a Labrador retriever sporting a natty yellow bandana Once again this election went to the dogs.

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST UNDER 21 HANGOUT

The Town Tavern

At the Oakland public library!!! *melee*

MOST INFLUENTIAL PERSON

Marty Glick

Lets keep the A's in Oakland. — *scarily@eBay.com*

Nina Summers

Poet, author, activist, story teller Fairyland fairy godmother Go years post A peculiar sons and beloved person, received Woman of the Year Award this year — *nsummers@*

Sal Rosselli, National Union of Healthcare Workers

Is working to get SEIU out of representing healthcare workers in California with subcontinent, company-dominated unionists. —*jaspers*

Van Jones

Yes still. — *arsenal!*

BEST POSTMASTER AND POST OFFICE

Elena Tyrrell, Canyon Post Office

99 Pinehurst Rd., Canyon 925 376-5630

Bizarre abnormalities are apparent before you've even set foot in this post office Dial the phone number and a human being answers. A *friendly* human being Ihm name is Elena Tyrrell and she's a second-generation postmaster and the sole employee at this branch in Canyon a tiny unincorporated community nestled between Oakland and Moraga A government run office with a single worker? It sounds like a Kafkaesque nightmare, but this postal Xanadu never even has a line. Instead there's a dish of free candy and family photos used to the counter Renegade Elena doesn't wear the uniform and brings her faithful pup Joe to work with her most days. The cabin like building boasts folksy flower-child touches like hand carved wooden signs for the, "local" and "out of town" mail slots. The catch? It s practically a day trip to get there.. From Skyline Boulevard in Montclair head down the eastern slopes of the Oakland hills on zigzagg Pinehurst Road Eventually the road darkens beneath towering redwoods, the birds (an are they angels?) begin to sing, and a luxuriously empty parking lot manages next to — seriously — a gurgling stream. Going postal never felt so good.

BEST K 12 TEACHER

Nancy Boyles

The cacophony of a middle-school band is nothing compared to the chaos al Nancy Boyles' schedule. The 24 year veteran band teachm starts her mornings at the crack of dawn to get the King Middlin School concert band up and running by 7 30 Then she gets in her car and continues on to three other schools in the Berkeley Unified School District If you have ever been a teenager yourself whith you may no longer wish to admit then you are Intimately aware of the zombie-like haze in which teenagers move around in the morning you know the drive of the marvellist instinct to not part with a single ounce of sleep Keeping u fully functional and kinda fabulous band of 75 teenagers motivated to attend before-school rehearsals at 7:30 a m every morning of the school year is an Incredible feat Almost as miraculous is that the band plays in time

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FOREST CITY

BEST PLACE TO STUDY

Cafe Milano

2522 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, 510-644-3100

Bookended by the temptations of Telegraph Avenue in one direction and the ever-popular Caffe Strada in the other, it'd be easy to miss Cafe Milano. But that would be a mistake because this is exactly what a college cafe should be. The coffee, from the same roaster that supplies several cafes in the area, is solidly decent, and Milano has all the standard cafe characteristics — free Wi-Fi, wi-fi, substantial and surprisingly tasty food, classical music. But what really sets Milano apart from the rest is its atmosphere. All high ceilings and exposed brick, this place is so pleasant it's a shame to associate it with problem sets and papers. There's also plenty of natural light, several potted plants, an open-air roof, and when it's warm out the cafe's massive two-story windows are left entirely open. It's a wonder anyone gets any work done.

BEST LOCAL INNOVATOR

BIOFAB

Biofab.org

Mankind has been nudging genes to do our bidding since we first domesticated animals tens of thousands of years ago. Over the eons we've been selecting for desirable traits in plants and animals, altering the course of evolution. In the latter part of the 20th century, genetic manipulation took a more direct route with the discovery of our own DNA, as well as that of many other species, and we're now at the point where we're rewriting the code of bacteria and even writing code from scratch for simple life forms. Now, mankind is set to take things way further and craft "life" from scratch. BIOFAB, the International Open Facility Advancing Biotechnology, was founded in December 2009 with tens of millions of dollars in federal science grants and a partnership between Stanford and UC Berkeley. This year, the Emeryville lab creates its first sets of standard biological parts, a step toward wholly synthetic life. If Biofab succeeds, biotechnologies like alternative fuel and cancer treatments are expected to explode. The world is watching.

BEST HOTEL LOBBY

Hotel Shattuck Plaza

2086 Allston Way, Berkeley, 510-845-7300, HotelShattuckPlaza.com

The Shattuck, Berkeley's first and oldest hotel, was built in 1910 and expanded a few years later into what was then the largest structure in the quake-beleaguered Bay Area. After changing hands over several decades, the handsome Mission Revival building underwent a year-long, multimillion dollar renovation and is now a classy, boutique, hotel smack in the middle of downtown Berkeley. Its neo-vieux-Rococo lobby is especially striking. A curved walkway limned in iron filigrees leads you from the entrance to a phantasmagoric sentinel area dominated by an opaque, blood red chandelier. Kaleidoscope carpets accent the alternately tiled and marbled flooring, and pillars covered in mosaic glass reflect the lobby's deep-orange and cerulean armchairs. Off to the right is a huge horseshoe-shaped bar in pale green marble from the turn-of-the-century. It's a good place to enhance the lobby's already dazzling aesthetic with a little self-administered psychedelia. ●

Readers' Picks

BEST AC TRANSIT BUS LINE

The 51R

— Jon Trenkle

BEST CAR STEREO ATTACHED TO BIKE

Radio Man, West Oakland

— nonad

BEST COUGAR

My girlfriend

— shawnag

BEST HOLIDAY

Berkeley Mardi Gras

— mmgeee

BEST HUSBAND

Gregory Alter

For working phenomenally long hours and still coming home to a sick, pregnant wife with patience (most of the time), and taking on practically all of the family chores. *— heatherne*

BEST LOOKING BLACK MALE OVER THE AGE OF 30

Bryant Hicks

— Bryant Hicks

BEST NEW COMMUNITY SPACE

The David Brower Center

— dodobk

BEST PLACE TO BRING PEOPLE FROM OUT OF TOWN

Berkeley campus

— jennifer4500

BEST PLACE TO DISCOVER OAKLAND HISTORY

The Oakland History Room in the Main Library in the Oakland's attic.

When else can you find out about Moore Dry Docks the Oakland Oaks, the history of your neighborhood the Black Panthers? This area of the library is filled with books articles research materials, photographs of almost any subject imaginable pertaining to Oakland. *— pamela magnuson peddle*

SEXIEST PLACE IN OAKLAND

Rock Paper Scissors Collective.

— denied

BEST PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT TO HIBERNATE ON

The new Bay Bridge

That slut is ridiculous; I can't believe the bike path will only go to the island! *— watersnakesnack*

Restaurants & Bars



Best use of a fireplace–Russell Moore of Camino

Chris Duffey

BEST USE OF A FIREPLACE

Camino

3917 Grand Ave 510-547-5635
CaminoRestaurant.com

Remember when wood-fired pizza ovens were all the rage? Russell Moore, a twenty-plus-year veteran of Chez Panisse, has upped the ante at his own restaurant, Camino, with his state-of-the-art wood fired oven and cooking fireplace. Moore does amazing things with the food he plates up. The blazing hearth and monster oven dominate the rustic and cavernous Grand Avenue restaurant with communal tables and church-pew benches. Moore and his staff do wonders with the wood and fire, turning out delicious smoke-kissed, wood-oven baked oysters; lovely flame-licked grilled white sea bass; and succulent Dungeness crab dinners. Moore heats cherries, fines lemons, and roasts things like potatoes in duck fat. He crushes delicate nettle custard, tasty fava bean gratin, and poaches eggs. He serves goat and pork belly and makes cornmeal-olive oil cake and sundy — all on an open flame with wood. But Moore is no Neanderthal. He has evolved fire-art cooking to the highest order. Just don't be surprised when more Bay Area chefs follow his lead.

BEST NEW CHEZ PANISSE SPIN OFF

Pop-Up General Store

4629 Martin Luther King Jr Way, Oakland, in Grace Street Catering PopUpGeneralStore.blogspot.com

Ramon Nissen and Christopher Lee, both Chez Panisse alums, started this farmers' market-meets-online fancy food catalog, where people order prepared, restaurant-quality food online, then pick it up at the makeshift store when it "pops up" every two to three weeks then finish frying or baking at home. They started it in January to keep alive beloved recipes from Eccolo, their now-shuttered Berkeley Italian restaurant, and keep loyal customers sated with boudin blanc sausages and lemme-cut rigatoni. They've since hassled a posse of their friends, current and former Alice Waters cheflebys, to sell their own caramels, English muffins, mole, and gratin. When the quasi-spontaneous, quasi-underground market where purveyors and consumers are able to co-mingle was launched, it rose to foodie-craze status after an article in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, with hundreds of impatient customers complaining about lines. But organizers hope the crowds will thin back down to the forgiving culinary explorers who just want to have a conversation with the chef who cooked their food.

BEST OF THE EAST BAY home grown

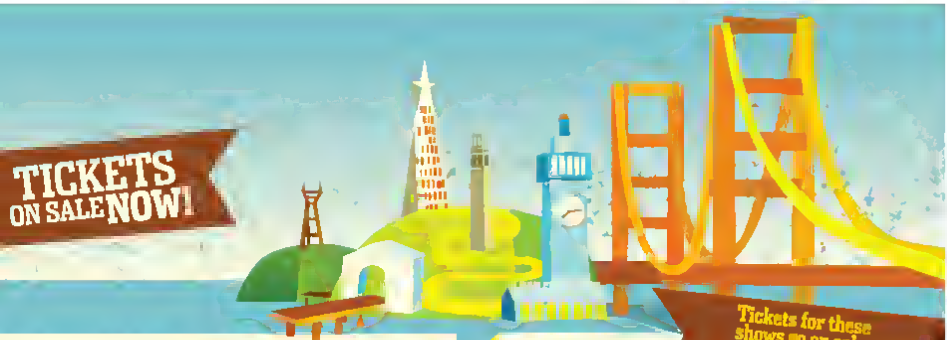
BEST NEW RESTAURANT

Commis

3859 Piedmont Ave Oakland, 510-653-3900.
CommisRestaurant.com

Before Oakland native Chef James Syhabout opened Commis last year he'd already garnered countless accolades as a rising culinary star. The result of stints at some of the very best restaurants in the world. Fortunately for East Bay gourmands, when it came time for him to open his own place, Syhabout decided to head home. How gratifying it must have been then that within a year of opening, Commis became Oakland's first-ever restaurant with a Michelin star. Given the chef's pedigree and penchant for experimentation (with a dash of molecular gastronomy here and a pleasantly surprising flavor component there) you might expect the food at Commis to be overly intellectual or weird. But this tiny Piedmont Avenue restaurant serves some of the hottest, most inventive food you'll ever have the pleasure of eating. Syhabout serves a three-course prix fixe menu ($58 a person, plus an optional $29 wine pairing) that changes seasonally and allows you to mix and match appetizers, en-


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FRIDAY, AUGUST 13TH

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The Independent
FRIDAY, AUGUST 13TH

HERCULES AND LOVE AFFAIR
Mighty | FRIDAY, AUGUST 13TH

TOKYO POLICE CLUB AND **FREELANCE WHALES**
Rickshaw Stop | FRIDAY, AUGUST 13TH

PRETTY LIGHTS | The Independent
SATURDAY, AUGUST 14TH

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www.SFOutsideLands.com

trées, and desserts. Or make your reservations for the chef's counter where you'll be served a six-course meal ($85) at the best seats in the house for watching the chefs put your dishes together with Zen-like choreographed precision.

MOST PLAYFUL PRIX FIX MENU

eVe

1900 University Ave Berkeley, 510-868-0735
Eve-Berkeley.com

Anyone who buys into New York chef David Chang's proclamation that Bay Area cuisine is "fine on plates" should slide down to the Gourmet Gulch where eVe's mix-n-match prix-fixe menu is sumptuous, playful and enters to a range of wallet widths and appetites. ($25 buys two courses and as many more as you like for $11 each.) Chef-couple Christopher and Veronica Laramie met while training at Le Cordon Bleu in Paris, and their collective resume has included work in Yvon Fruneer Miami, Chicago and Denver. But their passion for fresh seasonal ingredients led them to the East Bay, where they can source the majority of their ingredients by hand from local purveyors. Hopefully, they'll stay put, as they're taking local produce in exciting new directions. Recent appetizers have included a "Farm Egg dressed with morels, pancetta, and popcorn" and a Caesar salad re-imagined as a chilled soup. At the other end of the menu, desserts are often accented with cocoa products from De Chocolatier Blue next door, which was opened by another pair of Chicago expats who followed their friends to Berkeley.

BEST EMERGING PIZZA CHAIN

Lanesplitter

Various locations, LanesplitterPizza.com

It seems our little pizza joint has grown up. Two years ago, Lanesplitter still felt rather provincial — two popular pubs at hip spots in Berkeley and Oakland, and one take-out location up in Albany, all serving up some of the East Bay's best New York style thin-crust pizza. But last summer the business added on additional take-out spot in Oakland's Grand Lake neighborhood much to the pleasure of fans in the area who now had a shorter distance to travel — or a shorter time to wait for delivery — when it came to their Lanesplitter fix. What more could they ask for? Less than a year later, another location followed. The new Emeryville pub, located in a shoe-shaped structure at San Pablo and MacArthur avenues is bigger than its predecessors and sports a decidedly Emeryville look, exposed ceiling beams, air ducts, and wrung, unpainted concrete floors lots of big, open wooden tables, and from the front door a view of no fewer than four condo developments. The space has the distinct feel of a neighborly joint made good. As long as the pizza stays solid — which, on a recent lunchtime visit it did — longtime patrons can continue to look on in pride.

BEST NOUVELLI PIZZA

Boot & Shoe Service

3308 Grand Ave Oakland, 510-763-2668
BootAndShoeService.com

Ever since Alice Waters opened the Cafe at Chez Panisse and started serving little wood-fired pizzas with goat cheese and smoked duck instead of pepperoni and mozzarella, chefs have been putting all sorts of fresh upscale, or otherwise crazy stuff on their pizzas. Happily, many of these experiments in pie-topping cuisine have been exciting and delicious. Boot & Shoe Service, a cool industrial chic destination on Grand Avenue, is a case in example. Chez Panisse vet Charlie Hallowell tosses together eight different kinds of pizza on a given night — calzones with marjoram presentations, perhaps, or another with wild nettles ricotta salata and mozzarella curd, or (best of all) wafer-thin potatoes, smoky pancetta wild rosemary and a creamy egg yolk pulling it all together. You can also get classics like marinara or margherita and additional sausage anchovies, and arugula are available for a minimal charge. And did we mention the wonderfully light and tender crust that makes it all happen?

CLOSEST APPROXIMATION TO AN EAST COAST SLICE OF PIZZA

Rotten City Pizza

6613 Hollis St., Emeryville 510-655-2469
RottenCityPizza.com

Transplanted East Coasters are always harping on how Bay Area eateries inevitably butcher all the foods of their native coast: bagels, deli sandwiches, and, of course, your standard New York City slice. And while it really is more or less impossible to get a great bagel in the East Bay then, are more and more pizzerias putting out pies that even the most persnickety East Coast pizza purist can take comfort in. Among these, Emeryville's Rotten City Pizza reigns supreme, making pies with all the best qualities of an East Coast pizza: the thin flavorful crust that's crisp but foldable; the perfect harmony between sauce and cheese; the restrained application of traditional toppings. But let's be even more blunt: The pizza at Rotten City is significantly better (if a bit pricier) than most of what you'll find on the East Coast. What those pizzas lack in greasiness (which some New Yorkers crave), they more than make up for with superior ingredients, including organic veggies and hand-crafted Fra' Mani salumi. Make no mistake, though. These aren't frou-frou California-style pizzas with strange hippie toppings that would make your average Brooklynite cringe. No, this is classic East Coast pizza at its very best — perfected right here in Emeryville.

BEST CALI CHEESE STEAK

Rocky's Burger & Cheese Steaks

2629 Shattuck Ave Berkeley, 510-666-9246,
EatRocky.com

Purists may keel over from this proclamation, but the best cheese steak in town probably wouldn't cut it in Philadelphia, the home of the sandwich. In 2009, John Kerry drew criticism when he delicately ate a cheese steak that he had ordered with Swiss cheese. It may not be the reason he lost the presidential campaign but if Swiss cheese was cause for concern among traditionalists a cheese steak with Swiss and mushrooms would probably be considered a death sentence. At Rocky's, you won't find traditional Cheez Whiz on their sandwiches, but that doesn't mean they're not amazingly sinful. Meat that stays crisp despite being juicy and tender fills a toasted roll and gooey Swiss holds thick slices of mushroom like boats on an oozing sea. The soft give and earthy flavors of the mushrooms are a nice contrast to the sharp onions, and without the bell peppers there's a balance between subtle and strong. Dive in and don't be afraid of getting messy. You're not running for president, and any droppings become perfect fodder for a side of fries.

BEST FUSION FOOD CART

Seoul on Wheels

415-336-8387 SeoulOnWheels.com Twitter.com/SeoulOnWheels

East Bay streets are home to a wide range of taco carts but not many stray from the usual menu. When the *lengua* and *tortas* no longer do it for you check out this Korean BBQ truck that offers familiar fare with an Asian twist. The stars of the show are Korean tacos — meat or tofu, cilantro, lettuce, Korean chili sauce, and cremé. The sweet and spicy mix wonderfully as your tongue dances back and forth between the flavors, guided by charbroiled bits of crispy meat that melt with natural fats and not added oils. Burritos (Korean burritos) mix gooey cheese, meat, rice, and kimchi for a new take on portable meals, but it's the Dave Burger that takes the prize for the biggest indulgence. With two thick patties that have the crunch and give only obtainable on a grill, cheese, spicy pork, kimchi, lettuce, chili sauce, and mayonnaise (not to mention the pile of salty fries), it's fun fun on a bun big enough to split with two or three people. Follow the proprietor Julia Yoon on Twitter for updates on where she'll be satisfying the masses every day.

BEST ITALIAN IRANIAN BISTRO

Lamb Cabbage Wraps at I Squared

5663 College Ave Oakland, 510-658-4600
ISquaredLand.com

Rockridge's sleek little I Squared restaurant serves a handful of Persian dishes and a handful of Italian dishes, but it serves only one Persian hyphen Italian dish. The house-specialty cabbage wraps are not only one of the more unusual examples of fusion cookery in the Bay


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Readers Slay the Darndest Things

BEST AFRICAN RESTAURANT

Cafe Ethren D'Afrique

If only they hadn't changed their sign so it's no longer "a cozy place to be." Veggie combo still amazing though. — *Jessejay*

BEST BAR

Asena Bar

The only bar with Jameson, Fernet, and Evan Williams Whiskey on TAP! — *hellofrenemon*

Early Lounge

One of the few places using fresh juices and fruit in their amazing seasonal cocktails. Plus they have the best DJs in the bay and a smoking patio. This is my favorite of the favorites. — *zoeeydo*

Heart and Dagger

Bring your dog! — *hazam*

Missouri Lounge

Recession Specials + Gazebo + On-Site Barbecue = Big Fucking Win for West Berkeley. — *Oaksmoor*

Scotts on 19th Street in Downtown Oakland

That double vodka saved my life on one hard day! Thanks Rod! — *Jennifer Copley*

The Alehn Club

Longest bar and oldest beer in town. — *cornlife*

The Trappist

They even have a gluten-free beer! — *rebeccaSoup*

Area and possibly the world, they're absolutely delicious — a fabulous dish like nothing else you've tasted. Mediterranean turnagan and the kitchen's luscious marinara sauce are combined with the Middle East's cumin, cinnamon, and ground lamb and stuffed into tender cabbage leaves with dill, parsley, and rice resulting in a sweet, spicy, creamy, citrusy platter of good old pan Eurasian comfort food. The wraps are no bread-turning beauties but the aroma will get your taste buds working as soon as the two steaming rolls hit your table. Thankfully, the delectable creation proves the 1 Squared mantra at all times. Italian and Iranian you're wondering? Iconoclast chef Nazi Madjlesi gained her creed from LoCoco's and Iranian culinary prowess from his mother. And the rest of Madjlesi's menu (kebobs and pasta, mostly) is really good too, and the setting is hip yet casual in the Japanese, blond wood, stainless-steel fashion.

BEST SPICY SWEET HOT TREAT

The Spicy at Bittersweet Café

5427 College Ave Oakland 510-654-7159; 730 Camino Ramon, Ste. 120, Danville, 925-837-9900, BittersweetCafe.com

Who doesn't love hot chocolate and — even better — hot chocolate with a peppery kick, two great tastes that taste great together? The Spicy from Bittersweet is the best stuff on the planet, but make no mistake: This is not your grandmother's hot chocolate. It's deliciously smooth, frothy, and fiery with spice. These pricey, little cups of goodness ($3.95) go down too easy — tasty, warm, velvety, rich and then — hopeful — thin piquant pepper strikes with a hint of cinnamon and rose. Inhale, take a breath, sip again. Sip slowly. Try to pace yourself like counting the links it takes to get to the center of a Tootsie Pop. When done use finger, tongue, spoon, etc., to get every foamy drop from the cup. If you don't have normal business in the vicinity of Bittersweet, you'll be inventing reasons to head that direction after just one Spicy. It's that kind of an addictive treat.

BEST HEALTHY FAST FOOD

Amanda's Feel Good Fresh Food

2122 Shattuck Ave Berkeley, 510-548-2122, Amandas.com

After working in high tech for years, Peninsula native Amanda West took a job at Niman Ranch, which introduced her to the idea of sustainability. Yet she still loved fast food in principle, cherishing it as part of America's heritage. One Stanford business degree later West set up shop in 2008. Her vision was nutritionally balanced organic fast food in eco-friendly packaging — in other words, Whole Foods meets In-N-Out Burger. From 100-percent compostable corn-fiber faux-plastic boxes and recycled paper bags, patrons pull beef burgers — bargain-priced at only $3.75 — and chicken burgers made with hormone- and antibiotic-free meat; vegan vegetarburgers made with mushrooms and walnuts; cheeseburgers made with organic American cheese, house-made fruit-flavored soft drinks, and fries that aren't actually fried. Some entrées plunge seasonally; a Summin Salad featuring bleu-cheese chunks and candied almonds amid organic peach slices, carrot ribbons, and Belgian endive — served with a whole-wheat roll — is as wholesome as if Grandma made it if Grandma was a cool foodie hipster.

BEST VEGAN RESTAURANT

Souley Vegan

301 Broadway, Oakland, 510-922-7815

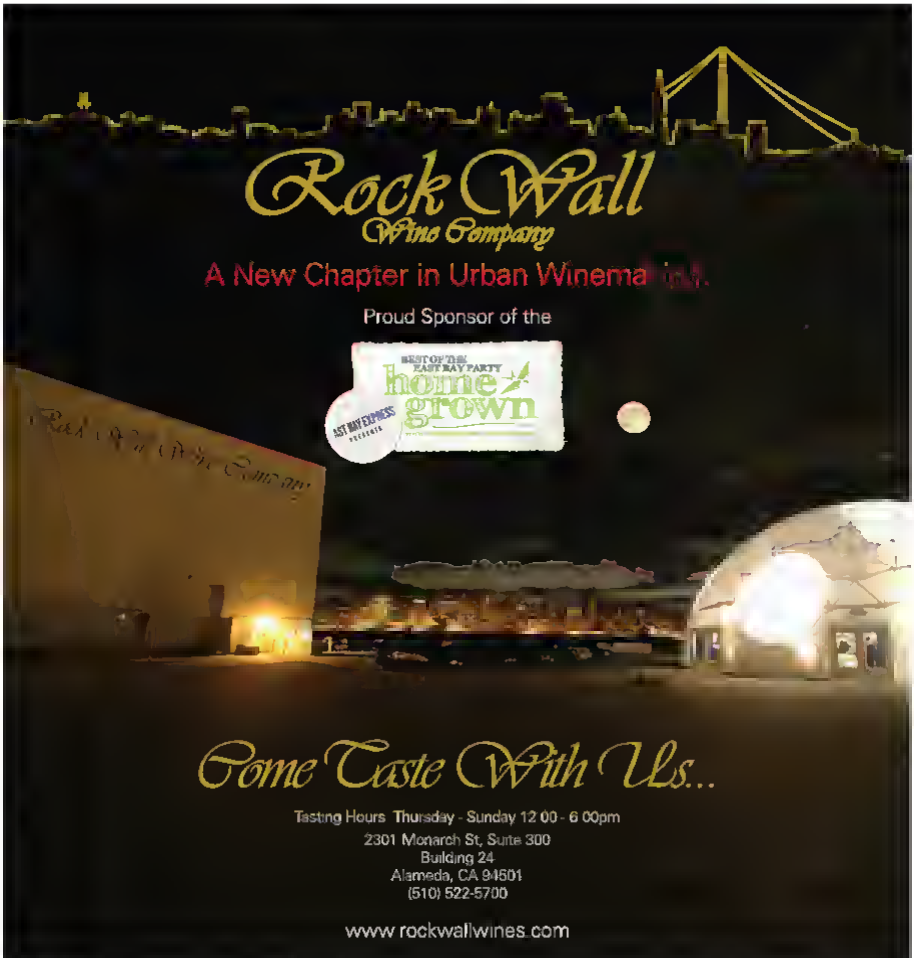
One of the best meat free eateries in the Bay Area prides itself on a cuisine that's typically anti-vegan. While at most soul food restaurants you can count on lard or bacon as staple ingredients in even the most innocuous sounding veggie dishes, Souley Vegan has managed to make delicious vegan versions of all sorts of Southern staples. First-timers should try the $10 everything plate (usually more than enough for two people to eat), featuring a taste of this restaurant's best dishes, including fried tofu "catfish," fake mac and cheese, barbecued tofu corn "ribs," and candied yams. And unlike a traditional fat- and cholesterol-heavy soul food meal, you can completely gorge yourself and count on not feeling too gross afterwards. Fan-thin people who can give up meat but never booze take your plate next door to Beer Revolution.

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BEST ROOT VEGGIES

Bocanova

55 Webster St., Oakland. 510-444-1233. Bocanova.com

Root vegetables — subterranean packets of edible energy ranging in personality from paradigm and turnips to fennel, burdock, and cassava — can be dull or delicious, depending on who's doing the cooking. Fortunately for us tuber aficionados, the folks at Jack London Square's Bocanova know just how to jazz up those dense starchy veggies without detracting from their earthy individuality. Sweet potatoes are baked in gratin with cream, spice, and a hint of chipotle pepper until irresistibly rich and hearty. Beets roasted and served with chevre, feta cheese, and *aji amarillo* are sweet, bright, and tangy all at once. And the house specialty "burnt carrots," is absolutely addictive chunks of lush, slow-cooked flavor touched with the snark of cilantro. The kitchen also knows how to employ zesty accents like peanuts, garlic, cumin, and jicama in their impressive menu of pan American salads, stews, and ceviches.

BEST UNIDENTIFIABLE VEGGIES

Grand Tavern

3811 Grand Ave., Oakland. 510-444-6844. GrandTavern.net

Maybe it's the organic, farm-fresh ingredients, maybe it's chef Kay Noor's mastery with herbs and spices, but Grand Tavern's wide array of vegetable dishes are unique, delicious, and irresistible. This is particularly surprising because this veggies in question look like rib-but food, which is to say something out of the back-to-nature Woodstock health food era. Meet these tiny hillocks of earth-toned plant food halfway though, and you're in for a treat. mashed sweet carrots with a hint of lemon and walnut roasted squash puréed until creamy and spiced with garlic, anise, and chili pepper earthy baked spinach infused with bits of sweetly sun-dried tomato eggplant, bell peppers, and zucchini roasted with garlic and topped with a dollop of sour cream. The setting is a reconstructed vintage-stucco Oakland residence, and the Noor family (including daughter Jasmine and son Temoor) creates an atmosphere every bit as homey and comfortable as their nutritious, delicious food.

BEST VEGETARIAN PHO

Golden Lotus Restaurant

1301 Franklin St., Oakland. 510-893-0383 GoldenLotusVege.com

Vegetarian beef noodle soup sounds like an oxymoron, but it exists in one of Supreme Master Ching Hai's vegetarian Vietnamese restaurants in downtown Oakland. For around $7 you get a steaming bowl of meatless *pho*, complete with imitation beef neatly lined on top of rice noodles. The place is heaven for vegans and vegetarians in search of tasty food that's not your run-of-the-mill sandwich shop. In addition to pho, the place also serves specialty dishes such as carmelized "chicken" pineapple "salmon" and a tasty sautéed garlic "beef" (all of those run about $10). The entrées are good with brown rice, even better if up off your meal with vegan mocha chocolate cake. The place is



Best Takeout: Alain Delangle of La Belle Vie

Melissa Barnes

operated by Ching Hai, a self-anointed supreme being on the level of Buddha (reincarnate — same say cult leader — who runs a huge organization with many "disciples." The restaurant has flyers about her as well as the slogan, "Be Veg! Go Green! Save the Planet." That much, at least, many of us can agree upon.

BEST HOMEMADE SOUP

Zand's

1401 Solano Ave., Albany. 510-526-7027 510-338-3600 ZandPastry.com

Maybe you think soup isn't for summer. Think twice. — or three — Zand's cure. A good bowl of soup, made in house by owner Momer Attar, is refreshing and light for lunch or dinner. Zand's has three choices, each suited to a different lunch base. The vegan alternative, *ashe mast* (ashe means soup in Farsi), marrying lentils, vegetables, herbs, and rice. Add yogurt if you do dairy. *Ashe reshteh* takes wide noodles, beans, dill, spinach, and yogurt. Every bowl is slightly different — a few more noodles a different mix of beans or our favorite, lots of yogurt to deliver a tasty sour tang. Chicken dill, understated yet full of flavor, contains more dill than the noodle version, large shreds of excellent chicken, and lots of barley. The first two soups are $3.99 for a cup, $4.99 for a bowl, while the chicken version nets a buck to both. Don't pass up Zand's homemade dolmas (only 45 cents for a packed-full...rest-ally, myself) or the silky almond and pistachio baklava $3 for a large slice.

BEST CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP

Everest Cafe

1645 Solano Ave., Berkeley. 510-526-4815 Everest-Cafe.com

Nothing strengthens the body and warms the soul like chicken noodle soup, and of all the bowl's global variations, Nepal's *thukpa* has to be the most revivifying. The Everest Cafe's rendition is exemplary. It arrives at the table emitting a cloud of aromatic steam. Inside the bowl is a tangle of thick, hand-cut noodles, flecks of chicken marinated in herbs and spices, big chunks of carrot, broccoli, and sweet pepper, and a rich broth still at a bare simmer with a bouquet of cilantro adding its own bracing fragrance. Dip your spoon, inhale the essence of poultry and produce, and let this invigorating brew slip down your gullet. One bowl and you'll be ready to sherpa your way up Mount Diablo. Chase it with an order of samosas *chaat* (an irresistibly unconventional variation on tamale pie) and Everest itself won't seem beyond the realm of possibility.

BEST VEGETARIAN LUNCH, EXCEPT ON SATURDAYS

Amba

5664 Moraga Ave., Oakland. 510-339-8000 AmbaFalafel.com

As falafel joints go, Amba approaches great-ness. It's quick, fresh, inexpensive, and clean as a whistle, with food so good carnivores won't even miss the meat. Just one caveat. It's also kosher, so don't expect to find them open for business on Friday nights or Saturdays. With electric-orange walls and a communal table this spot exudes a welcoming buzz in Montclair, an Oakland neighborhood that's notoriously underserved by forward thinking restaurants. Amba's huge hummus bowls are drizzled with copious amounts of olive oil, served with pillowy pita, and topped with something warm, cheese from chickpeas, fava beans, mushrooms, or deep golden rounds of fried eggplant. Keep it simple with a couple of falafel balls and hot sauce, or cool off on a hot summer day with the Israeli salad, made with crisp cukes, tomatoes, parsley, and onions tossed with lemon and olive oil. Rotating specials like *boureka* (cheese turnovers) *moussaka* and flatbread keep the menu lively. Desserts aren't the focus here, but don't pass up a couple of crescents of warm, cinnamon-flecked *rugelach* to finish things off.

BEST FALAFEL

Chick-O-Pea's

1936 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-540-0880 ChickOPeas.com

On a wedding-anniversary trip to Paris, Kamran Nassiri and his wife watched lines of eager customers winding out of popular falafel spots all the streets of the Latin Quarter. Back home in the East Bay, Nassiri — who immigrated from Iran to Walnut Creek in the 1970s — resolved to open his own falafel shop following the Parisian model, featuring an array of toppings that patrons could add to their falafels as they wished. A Bay Area restaurant-business veteran and a street vegetarian, Nassiri resolved to make his shop entirely meatless — not a gyro in sight — and use only biodegradable serving-ware and bags. A dozen different and mainly Lebanese-inspired options comprise Chick-O-Pea's falafel bar. Irresistible-level pickled relish to herbed cauliflower to scorching-hot *harissa*, sweet roasted beets, pickled red onions, pickled celeriac, *tarator* tahini sauce, and mixed beans made elegant with garlic and gourmet-grade olive oil. Any or all of these can be loaded into falafel balls in a startlingly thick crescent of freshly house-baked pillowy soft-but-pliable pita for a juicy-chewy-crunchy-hot delight.

BEST BIG SCHOOL DELI

Zarri's Delicatessen

1266 Solano Ave., Albany. 510-525-5405. ZarrisDeli.com

This little gem of a deli is the kind of store every neighborhood would be lucky to have



Perfectly balanced.

Pale Ale. Uniquely Interpreted.

Brewed in the Belgian Tradition for a Smooth Finish.

Now on Tap.

Artfully Crafted

a friendly, unpretentious place where you can grab a cheap, satisfying sandwich for lunch or pick up everything you need to throw together a quick weeknight Italian dinner. Ever since, Zarri's Delicatessen opened for business on Solano back in 1974, its calling card has always been that it are a simple but tasty sandwiches, many of which will run you less than $4. Popular choices include an egg or tuna salad that's about as good as you can get, as well as Zarri's signature "poor boy" which, for just $3.25, comes piled high with bologna, salami, and sliced cheese. The sandwiches come on your choice of bread, but those in the know tend to stick with the excellent soft sourdough rolls. While waiting in line to place your order, check out the wide selection of gourmet Italian food products — high-quality olive oils, boxed *pannetone*, canned sardines, and plenty more. It's a no-frills, no-credit-card kind of place, so bring cash, debit, or — in keeping with the overall quaintness of the store — a personal check.

BEST IN-N-OUT ALTERNATIVE

Trueburger

146 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-200-5670, TrueburgerOakland.com

In-N-Out has built a reputation on the American burger, but who wants to drive to Pinole or the Oakland Airport when the craving strikes? Alongside Lake Merritt, Trueburger serves a gorgeous example of the American culinary hat trick: burger, fries, and a shake. Ground Angus beef, lettuce, tomato, and a garlic sauce (onions and pickles optional) are all executed to perfection. Lettuce keeps the juicy patty from coating the toasted bun and the sauce is complementary but not overpowering. The inevitable side order of fries is salty and crack under pressure releasing steam from the soft center. Made from real ice cream, the shakes carry all of the chrissy thick, creamy, and fresh flavor whether it's a plain vanilla or spiked with add-ins. Who could ask for a better lunch? If you did get tired of it you could order a salad, but that'd be, well, un-American.

BEST ROASTED CHICKEN

Venus

2327 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-540-5959, VenusRestaurant.net

Like most simple-sounding dishes, roasted chicken is difficult to get right. Most of the time the bird is either too dry, too tough, or (horror of horrors) too pink to inspire confidence. Venus, a cozy Berkeley temple to seasonal organic/sustainable comfort food, knows just how to bake a chicken to tender, juicy perfection. Chef Amy Murray starts with an organically raised free-range fowl from Hoffman Farms out in the San Joaquin Valley. It's enormous, this bird is, and full of flavor, and it emerges from the oven moist, fragrant and absolutely palatable. Depending upon the season it might be accompanied by braised chard and pear-cranberry chutney or summer squash and black-eyed peas, but an ongoing source of pleasure are the puréed heirloom German butterball potatoes that are to your standard mashed taters as Devonshire cream is to Cool Whip. Dig in.

BEST MOLES IN FORTY YEARS

Talavera

1581 Solano Ave., Berkeley, 510-956-8566



Best fun on food cart: Scout on Wheels — Melissa Barnes

Decades ago, San Pablo Avenue boasted a tiny restaurant called La China Poblana. The owners, one from India and one from Mexico, served regional foods of both nations, grinding spices daily. Talavera makes the best mole since serving up two variations, guajillo mole, using guajillo chiles and pumpkin seeds to create a rich, heavy sauce, and the more familiar mole poblano with Mexican chocolate, ground with spices and chiles into a complex mix. Plates ($9.50) come with rice, pickled jalapeños, and tortillas. The mole burritos ($7.40) are a better deal as one can pack a large portion away to eat later or split with someone else as a delicious topping for nachos. The mole poblano burrito (with chicken or pork version) uses excellent meats and rice, and is interlaced with pickled onions, which give a good bite through that depth-charge of a sauce. Talavera is charming, with its sparkling tiles (hence the name) and chunky tables. The only down side is that you can't fill up on homemade chips while you wait — the staff dispenses the snacks gingerly as if a third rail runs through their plastic bin.

BEST PÂTÉ

Adesso

4395 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-601-8306, DopoAdesso.com

Adesso is best known for its fantastic array of salumi (some four dozen variations at last count), but the kitchen is equally adept at the crafting of angularly spiced pâtés in wide and easy variety. We aren't talking your garden variety French liverwurst but stuff like chopped duckbreast spiced with blood orange and pig's head sausage, minced chicken with bits of artichoke and the rind of the Meyer lemon, and ciccioli, scraps of fatty pigment pressed, dried, and used into a dream of crunchy cholesterol. There's also a rustic, coarsely textured rabbit varietal touched with saffron and sparkling prosecco. But our favorite pate is the pigeon, a satiny slice of puréed swan accented with tarragon, fennel, juniper, and aurand ham. (You can also order good old duck liver paté, presented, whimsically, *"in santoshi"* or canned.) The house pâtés are served with toasted rounds of lightly buttered Acme sourdough — yum — and the grapefruit gimlet makes a nice bracing accompaniment to all those rich flavors.

BEST ANTIPASTI

Marzano on College

5356 College Ave., Oakland, 510-595-4058, MarzanoRestaurant.com

Those savory, little appetite-primers known as appetizers are our favorite part of any meal, whether they're the tapas of Spain, the zakuski of Russia, the mezes of the Middle East or (best of all) the antipasti of Italy. At Marzano in Rockridge trattoria the antipasti is appetizing indeed offering a menu of lively, Neapolitan snacks that are distinctive, enough to make a memorable meal all on their own. Opt for juicy, smoky wood-fired meatballs served on a bed of Swiss chard and prosciutto. Sicilian rice balls stuffed with mozzarella, pine nuts, and golden raisins; pan-roasted octopus draped with preserved lemon and arugula; *bruschetta* topped with prosciutto, cannon beans, or house-pulled mozzarella; feathery *frutte misto* of asparagus, summer squash, fennel, and cauliflower; eggplant fritters with currants, pecorino, and a dollop of tomato jam. You also can order an antipasto board piled with crispy peas, pancetta, prosciutto, watercress, and grilled goat cheese wrapped in grape leaves. *Abondanza!*

BEST FISH 'N' FRY

Louisiana Fish & Chips

2817 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-451-4566

Too often a basket of deep-fried fish shows up at the table swimming in so much oil that it reminds you of a Tiny Hayward press conference. Well, you won't find the BP jester anywhere near this hole-in-the-wall. When any food is correctly deep-fried, the food's evaporating moisture pushes outward to keep the oil from being absorbed into the batter. Whether it's the sole, snapper, oysters, prawns, or soft-shell crab's crunchy, bits of seafood hit the baskets not limp piles of mush. Moreover, the flavors remain distinct — if you've ever bitten into a French fry to get a slightly fishy taste, it's because the cook used the same oil for strong flavors as weak ones. Here, oysters are butter, cat fish are muddy, fries are starchy, and never the twain shall meet. Regular orders (which come with bread and a side such as coleslaw, fries, or hushpuppies) are a big meal for one person, and the large orders are the perfect deep-fried double date.

BEST MEXICAN RESTAURANT

Mariscos La Costa

3625 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-533-3566

Fresh delicious, double corn tortilla tacos for $1. Ceviche tostados spilling over with pescado, camarones y pulpo (or fish, shrimp, and octopus). Cilantro, radishes, all the appropriate condiments. Great fresh food, really, really cheap. Get it to-go and make your colleagues mouths' water, or eat it there to avoid any wai

ing. This stable eatery in the heart of Fruitvale at International and 27th does seafood right and anything on the menu that comes from the sea is definitely worth getting, from the $1 oysters to the fish tacos. What's not to love about Mariscos La Costa? There's easy parking, you dine on a covered tiled patio under palm trees, and the fabulous hard-core next to nothing, so it's quite a bargain. It's quick, too: with your order arriving at the window Tickety-split. For a mere five-spot, you can eat like a king, so treat yourself and your date and then come to a trip to Mexico without even leaving Oaktown.

BEST REASON TO SKIP THE SALSA BAR

The Quesadilla Monte Cristo

1466 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-486-0121

You know the taqueria routine: Order your tortilla-wrapped sustenance at choice, pay and head to the salsa bar to fill up little plastic cups with your favorite salsas. Well, what if these condiments were already on the plate, waiting for you, ripe for the dipping? This is the question that Taqueria Monte Cristo answers with its Monte Cristo Quesadilla ($6.50). This quesadilla isn't just paired with hot stuff, and tomatillo hot a super trio of condiment-cohorts that take the quesadilla up a notch. There's a simple fresh salsa ranchera sure. But there's also a chipotle mayonnaise, well suited for the carnitas and chorizo, and a sweet garlicky cilantro-paste sauce that is best enjoyed with the carne asada. You won't find these flavors at the salsa bar though your burrito-craving friends will still enjoy their mild avocado salsa or for a kick, the "hot" salsa, chock full of pepper seeds. Monte Cristo stays open till midnight to satisfy your late-night quesadilla cravings.

MOST SPANISH TAPAS JOINT

Barlata

4901 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-450-9678, Barlata.com

When traveling to Barcelona, Bilbao, and elsewhere in Spain, the only way to eat is at tapas bars where you point to the octopus, sardines, anchovies, mussels squid, patatas bravas, cured meats, and other tasty treats that pass by, to create your own meal. The server counts your toothpicks at the end of the meal to tally up your bill. It's a communal experience where you come in see what your neighbor to the left just ordered and then do the same. When seeking out tapas in the East Bay, the place that will most remind you of Spain and that delicious small-plate experience is Barlata. The instant Temescal hit serves much of its fare in "latas," or cans, reminiscent of old-timey fish tins. The extensive menu is heavy with seafood, albarizas, and fish with ox tail...pigs feet, and rabbit thrown in for good authentic measure. The three cold gazpachos — each one dramatically different from the other — is a party in your mouth. The atmosphere at Barlata is lively yet charming and warm, and the food, from small plates to later plates, is fabulously good. What's more Spanish that that?

BEST ITALIAN

Dopo

4293 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, DopoAdesso.com

A remarkably tall, dapper and amiable host

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST BARBECUE

Brown Sugar Bbobon's
Indigestion

The director of the Michelin Guide raved about those ribs. They're a secret for chew but they won't be for long! — Pourkis

Double D's

Awesome, seriously the best barbecue I've had in Cali. Such a tiny spot tucked between International and 12th on 1st in Oakland! — *Nanaf*

T-Rex

Don't be discouraged by their logo: best drinks, BBQ and tastiest-but-classy vibe in town. — *frumpis*

BEST BREAKFAST/BRUNCH

Bette's Diner

Expand your space already — *Mex grass*

Fentwood Cafe

The waffleroons are usually funny. — *Monkey Man*

BEST CHEZ PANISSE SPINOFF

NO DISH OF THE DAY

Best new idea. No more Chez Panisse spinoffs! — *Thursday*

BEST CHINESE RESTAURANT

Shan Ming

Perfect combination fried chicken and dry fried green beans — *storm*

with a smile as wide as the length of a strand of spaghetti awaits you on the sidewalk outside of this quaint modern Italian joint in Oakland. He offers a glass of wine or a cocktail as you wait — perhaps the scrumptious 65 montepulciano or a slightly pricier soda and Cynar (who knew artichoke liquor could taste so good?) — making you feel as cozy as the divine food that awaits. The menu changes daily, but you can rest assured it will be scrumptious no matter the season. The tasty china pot of pork butter doled out with fresh bread (free upon request) makes a deliciously savory start to any meal. The meat used in both the patch-perfect pizzas and calzones provides that perfect golden, chewy crunch. The *pesce crudo* of the day is always worthy, and the fried soft-shell crab — when they have it — can't be beat. For dessert, you can't go wrong with a gelato (plum vanilla has never tasted so exotic), but you may decide to spend your calorie splurge on the warm lemon *zeppole*.

BEST PAN ASIAN FOOD CRAWL

Dublin Ulferts Center

4288 Dublin Blvd., Dublin, Ulferts.com/dublin

Built to serve the ballooning Asian population in the Tri-Valley area, the food at the Ulferts Center declines to cater to conventional American palates. More than a dozen restaurants and fund businesses serve distinct Asian cuisines from Japanese *shabu shabu* to Macanese. Spend a day at the Hacienda Crossings mall and multiplex movie theater and take all your snack and meal breaks at the Ulferts Center. Or even better, plan your culinary tour first and reboot your appetite with some shopping and speed walking. Super casual meals are best taken at Osaka Ramen, Just Kro Chinese, or Pamir Afghani Restaurant. But save yourself for the full dining experiences at Koi Garden, the high-end dim sum offshoot of Koi Palace in Daly City, or House of Sake for sushi. The median price point offers the most interesting culinary finds: Macau Bistro, named for the Chinese city colonized by the Portuguese in the 16th century has a menu with an identity crisis to match the hardcore Ah Tofu House & Korean BBQ serves fantastic *bibimbap* short ribs, and silky tofu pot soups in tidy vinyl booths; while spot-on blends of Indian, Thai and Chinese flavors are the main attraction at Singapore Old Town Cafe.

BEST SINGAPOREAN RESTAURANT

Singapore Old Town Cafe

4285 Dublin Blvd., Dublin, 925-833-8300

Surrounded by corporate buildings and nestled among a handful of other Asian eateries in the new Ulferts Center, Singapore Old Town Cafe is a hidden gem. Drawing on flavors from neighboring India and Thailand, and adding unique twists and sauces, the multi-page menu is a practice in difficult choices, and a relief from all the pad thai and chicken tikka masala joints. Singapore-style Chinese doughnuts — deep-fried squid and shrimp cake appetizers — some with pungent shrimp paste for the brave, and sweet duck sauce for the mildly brave. Classic Beef Kuntang, smothered in chunky, cardamom infused sauce, is a must try, as is the seafood yam basket. Crisp, wok fried prawns, scallops, mushrooms, and peppers are served in a complementary fried taro-nest bowl. Finish off the meal with *barista hitam*, creamy black sticky rice with coconut milk. To top it all off...owner Megan Chin whose husband stays in the kitchen is a total sweet heart, remembering lapsed customers faces with precision and warmth and chatting about her native and new countries with philosophical rigor.

BEST UNCONVENTIONAL SALADS

Burma Superstar

4721 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-652-2900,
1345 Park Ave., Alameda, 510-522-6200,
BurmaSuperstar.com

For most people, salads aren't the first thing that come to mind when thinking of Asian food, but then again, most people in this country aren't very familiar with the cuisine of Burma. Fortunately it is easy to rectify that situation by heading over to one of Burma Superstar's two East Bay locations. The sleek, uber-trendy eateries put out a variety of tasty curries and noodle dishes, but their salads — well their salads might fundamentally change the way you think of salad. Case in point, the restaurant's Tea Leaf Salad is a revelation of contrasting textures and flavors that meld together into a pleasing whole — there's the crunch of split yellow peas, sunflower seeds, and fried garlic; the wholesomeness of freshly chopped tomatoes and lettuce; the smokiness of dried shrimp powder; and tying everything together is the pungency of the fermented tea leaves. Burma Superstar's menu declares that members of the restaurant's staff actually do travel all the way to Burma to buy the pickled tea leaves that are its signature main component. It's like no other salad you've had before: prepared by servers at the table rather like a Caesar salad. Nearly as mind-blowing is the Rainbow Salad, a dish that boasts 32 different ingredients, including four types of noodles, tofu, green papaya, and a tamarind dressing — all bright, bright flavors. The restaurants are a bit often "it" spot for hip twentysomethings, so go early (or for lunch) to avoid the crowds.

BEST REGIONAL CHINESE CUISINE

China Village Restaurant

1335 Solano Ave., Albany, 510-525-2288, ChinaVillageSolano.com

Americans often think about Chinese food in sweeping generalities, assuming that every restaurant will serve up the same fried-and-true Americanized classics (General Tso's Chicken anyone?) — or else they expect fare so authentic other Cantonese fare. Of course Chinese cuisine as as diverse and as idiosyncratically regionalized as American cuisine. And, fortunately, the East Bay is home to restaurants like China Village, whose boldly flavored Szechuan specialties will blow your previous conceptions about Chinese food out of the water. Szechuan cuisine is known for being spicy and while there is plenty of heat to be found here, there is nuance, too — and even diners with little tolerance for spice can have a good meal. Favorites include the Twice-Cooked Pork — thinly sliced pork belly that's delightfully toothsome and smoky — and the Spicy Charred Stir-fried Lamb, which is a marvel of caramelization that'll forever change the way you think of the humble cabbage. And if you're lucky enough to dine at China Village during Dungeness season, make sure you order the Ma Po Tofu Whole Crab, whose marriage of a savory-spicy sauce with the unctuousness of crab roe might make it unwittingly the best crab dish and the best tofu dish that you've ever eaten.

BEST IZAKAYA

Sasa Restaurant

1432 N Main, Walnut Creek, 925-210-9138, SasaWC.com

Similar to Otamo in Oakland and San Francisco but run by a Japanese chef cooking his grandmother's comfort food, Sasa is the best new Japanese joint to land east of the Caldecott Tunnel. Chic earthy decor the result of a $4 million plus renovation including a long bar with sports on TV and a thick book of chilled sake options, seems to attract salarymen procrastinating their return to the wife and kids. Fantastic small plates featuring high-quality seafood from Tokyo and beef and pork from the Walnut Creek Meat Market are a creative

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Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST COCKTAILS

Best and Most

The house-made [illegible] — *Heather*

Happy Lounge

On Saturday they go to the farmers market and get fresh produce and make up some tasty drinks on the spot. — *other*

Move

Hands down the most consistently perfect cocktail! Balance, flavor, appearance — magnificent. — *lovemakeslovefood*

Foolishly Inflated

Bourbon!!! — *Oaklander*

Another

All their specialty drinks are served two ways: Chocolate (a classic peppermint) and Lonewave (prepared foaming as usual ingredients). Try the lonewave for a new take on your favorite drink. — *oaklander*

BEST COFFEE

Mudhouse Cappella at Cole Coffee

Forget all the fuss/hoopla. This is the real deal brew/ha ha. — *holdmeanator*

Best coffeehouse

Zoola

In San Leandro. — *Parrothill*

BEST DELI

Gateway

Are those other delis? — *holdmeanator*

The one on Solano that has a Z in it. — *drinkr*

BEST DESSERTS

Nilwan Chaya in Maple

Sr. Arunsile whips up his own house-made ice cream by hand. The flavors are sublime ... there are the usual but also the unusual — rose petal queen (obvious) pecan and corn. *Mighty* adventurous! — *journalist resigned-to-profile*

relief from all the other look-alike California roll tempura udon joints. Instead mainstays are the Riverstone steak, served on a smooth hot rock balanced on four pieces of chopped tarot root grilled yellowtail collar and deep-fried panko-crusted pork tenderloin. Sasa just opened in the spring with twenty year East Bay restaurateur Chef Philip Yang at the helm and a handful of businessmen behind him hoping to seriously reduce residents' excuses for going to San Francisco.

BEST CHAWAN MUSHI

Coach Sushi

532 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-834-7866.

CoachSushi.com

Many people may connect this Lake Merritt sushi joint with the eccentric owner and his endless sake, but it also serves a Japanese delight that's unbeknownst in East Bay eateries: *chawan-mushi*. Pronounced chaw-wan moo-shee, the savory dish is part custard, part soup. The base of the stock is *dashi* (a mixture of water, kelp, and bonito available conveniently in instant packets) mixed with eggs, soy sauce, *mirin* and salt, which bakes into a semi-solid custard. When stirred with a spoon, the egg that has risen to the top breaks up and mixes with chicken, shrimp, bamboo, mushrooms, and *kamaboko* (processed fish cakes). It's possible to serve as a dessert because the eggs add a touch of sweetness, but it usually appears as a soup course. If you've never had it the cups hold a great surprise sure to defy your expectations. Aside from being delicious and intriguing, the custard is a great conversation starter that has proven to light up the eyes of friends and strangers who grew up in Japan.

BEST PANCHAN SPREAD

Sura

4899 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-654-9282

One of the best things about eating at a Korean restaurant is the colorful assortment of little side dishes, or *panchan* that they bring out — for free! — at the beginning of your meal. And nowhere else in the East Bay is the pan chan spread as sumptuous or varied as at Sura, one of the newer restaurants in the row of Korean eateries that decorate a long stretch of Oakland's Telegraph Avenue. You never know exactly which side dishes you'll get, but they're always plentiful — as many as twenty at a time. In addition to the usual plates of assorted kimchi you'll find at any Korean restaurant, the pan *chan* at Sura often include a savory egg custard (served hot in a small stone bowl), thin shreds of purple potato and pink-hued daikon radish, cubes of sweet kabocha squash, strips of garlicky sauteed eggplant, and much much more. The flavors of the *panchan* are refreshingly delicate and nuanced, never hitting you over the head with sweetness or heat. During lunch hours, the spread of side dishes tends to be slightly smaller, but is still impressive — especially considering that Sura has some of the best lunch deals in town.

BEST LATE-NIGHT DELIVERY

Pho Me Now

1725 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-705-1522, PhoMeNow.net

Last year Steven Hsiao and Anson Tsui were UC Berkeley seniors facing a gloomy job market when they hit upon the idea of creating exactly the kind of business that they and their frat brothers fervently craved: a food-delivery service that was open way into the wee hours and served *pho*, a classic Vietnamese noodle soup known as a hang-over cure. Within weeks of graduation the two friends were acquiring permits, ordering supplies, and researching recipes online. Delivering in Berkeley until 4 a.m., Pho Me Now offers a wide range of noodle dishes, not just several different kinds of spiced beef/tripe/tendon/bean-sprout *pho*, but vermicelli salad, sweet garlic noodles, and more — along with egg rolls, rice plates, sandwiches, Vietnamese iced coffee, and other treats all prepared by Hsiao. The $9.75 Ultimate Brisket Bowl is an extra-large ocean of *pho*, packed

with PMN's specialty slow-cooked, thick-sliced brisket. Meatless dishes include fried egg and smoked tofu sandwiches.

BEST AFTER MIDNIGHT MEALS

Au Coquelet

2000 University Ave Berkeley 510-845-0431

A night-owl nest since the 1970s, Au Coquelet features a cafe, nut treat and a real restaurant out back that serves delicious full meals until 1:30 a.m. — a godsend in a town that otherwise pretty much hits the hay at 10 p.m. Skylight, soaring ceiling, sound-sucking wall-to-wall carpet, and DIY Christmas-bulb chandeliers facilitate the effect of dining in some warm foreign courtyard, but a diurnal menu makes the location of that courtyard up for debate. Lasagna and duck-crusted pizza say it's Italy, quesadillas and burritos and two-bean chili say it's Mexico. A rich, soft-crusted quiche says it's France. Reuben sandwiches say it's Anywhereville, USA. Grilled-eggplant sandwiches sporting mushrooms, peppers and tomatoes say it's Berkeley — as does the clientele...which ranges from local cops to pacifistic activists wearing Abu Ghraib–silhouette T-shirts to UC Berkeley students in various states of wakeful ness. Want dessert? The cafe serves liqueur cocktails and pastries including what might be the East Bay's best brownies.

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST BAY BAR

White Horse

Um, is there more than one? — *kenny*

Bench and Bar

Franklin St, near Broadway margs. — *jbrowne*

BEST HEALTHY FAST FOOD

Amanda's

And Amanda is really cute too. — *Tom Whilan*

BEST HOMEGROWN FUSION OF CUISINES

La Victoria Crepe Cafe

Best Fusion of Thai and Crepes you'll ever have! — *rengfan44*

BEST INDIAN/PAKISTANI RESTAURANT

Ali Sons Above Tandoor

The half Mexican food, half Pakistani/Indian — really good Pakistani/Indian selection and great prices! — *zuzu*

Flavors of India on Lakeshore in Oakland

I would stop over my mother and two of yours to get one of their veggie wraps — *thisbarringham*

BEST KOREAN RESTAURANT

Soban Mom

Love the ladies in the old-fashioned ajumma! — *mmorgulese@stanfordalumni.com*

BEST LOCALLY SOURCED MENU

Zatar

They have their own garden. — *jb sweeth*

BEST MEXICAN OR CENTRAL AMERICAN RESTAURANT

El Nopalito in Richmond

No one probably knows about it. It is great. — *kimpoo*

BEST NEW RESTAURANT

Hi5.0

Best food in Oakland. I'm almost too scared to sing its praises for fear I'll never be able to get a table in there again. — *Aleden*

BEST SANDWICH VALUE

Cam Huong Restaurant

820 Webster St., Oakland 510-466-8800

So you're hungry. It's Sunday, and you work in Downtown Oakland. Sure, there are hip new places to pick up lunch, but today give Chinatown's tiny Cam Huong deli a go for the tastiest ever *bahn mi*. That's a Vietnamese sandwich for the uninitiated (although the Vietnamese think of them as French sandwiches). The price is right — a steal actually — at $2.50 a pop/fresh $2.75. Like a Cuban or a hero, *bahn mi* is a bread and meat concoction with lots of fixings, just what a sandwich should be. The foundation of the Cam Huong *bahn mi* is its crunchy-soft French bread from the nearby Cam Huong bakery just up the street. But that's not all. Deli sandwich makers load these day-fresh loafs with young cilantro hot jalapenos, sweet mayo, an abundance of high-quality meat, pickled carrots and daikon and then wrap up the creation in butcher paper for easy, carry-away. We're fond of the Number Nine, grilled pork, although there are more than a dozen varities to choose from. Or even better: work through the list systematically from start to finish and see what really rings your bell.

BEST MEAL FOR $1 OR LESS

Shan Dong Restaurant's Pork and Vegetable Bun

328 10th St., Oakland 510-839-2298, SD222.la

Everyone loves a bargain, and there are few things that can fill your tummy and cost more than buying a whole meal for just one dollar — especially when you manage to find something that isn't "full of rubbish" (as TV chef Jamie Oliver would put it). Oakland's Chinatown is a veritable treasure trove of cheap eats, and perhaps the best deal of all can be found at the popular Shan Dong Restaurant. Here, $1 will buy you a handmade pillowy steamed bun about the size of a newborn baby's head stuffed full of delectably juicy pork and tender cabbage bits. One of these huge buns by itself makes for a satisfying breakfast or lunch, and two or three would do for dinner in a pinch — though it's worthwhile to branch out and try Shan Dong's dumplings and lamb-cut noodles, which are also quite excellent. The buns reheat well in the microwave,



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Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST PIZZA

Chez Panisse
Most of the time. — *Chantelle*

Cheeseboard Pizza
Best thin-crust pizza. — *Rebecca M.*

Zachary's Pizza
Hands down the BEST in the WORLD!! — *boyfriend*

La Casa's
I am so very over Zachary's! — *kasey joy*

Oliveto's
We did an exhaustive study — *very good*

Pizza Antica
I eat a real pizza lover but I am now since eating at Antica! — *Trish M*

Pizza Picasso
Their gluten-free crust is great and all ways about $1 less than Picasso's gluten free offerings. — *Brandi*

too, so feel free to bring any leftovers to the office the next day, and smile in a self-congratulatory way as your co-workers ooh and ah

BEST BARGAIN BREAKFAST

Flavah Island Cafe

2097 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-704-4008

For many Americans, eating breakfast out was among the first comforts to be sacrificed when the economy went kaput. But what if you could enjoy a hearty restaurant breakfast for less than five bucks? At Berkeley's Flavah Island Cafe, chef/owner Delsiki Edwards branches out from the Jamaican specialties his restaurant is known for to offer traditional breakfast fare at bargain basement prices — it's one of the few places this side of Mieke's D's where you can get a full pancake breakfast for just $2.99. The generous stack of pancakes comes topped with fresh berries and syrup and includes a choice of bacon or breakfast sausage. Mind you, those aren't frou-frou gourmet pancakes, but they are toothsome and buttery, and served up hot. Other options include a couple different omelets and the steak and potatoes, which, at $5.99, is the priciest item on the regular breakfast menu. And if you're feeling flush or just in the mood for something more exotic, splurge on the special Jamaican breakfast ($7.99) — usually some variation on ackee and codfish the best in town. In theory, Flavah Island opens at 8:30 each morning, but it's the kind of super-casual place where it's best to call ahead to make sure

BEST SMALL TOWN BREAKFAST

Sunshine Café

1808 Oak Park Blvd., Pleasant Hill, 925-968-5160

Free range, organic, fair trade; these aren't naughty words, but sometimes the only word you want to hear is "breakfast." Stripped to its core, breakfast is comfort food loaded with fat and salt that will either keep you alive until you're 110 or kill you by 45, depending on which propaganda you believe. Tucked into a strip mall in a residential area, Sunshine Café doesn't guarantee a side of longevity with its simple fare, but since it has been in business for thirty years, maybe it should. Walk in as a stranger and two lovely words will greet you, "Good morning, Darlin'." Regulars rule the small space and they don't order as much as confirm: they'll have the usual. Eggs, bacon toast, hash browns, and pancakes are the norm, and with a cup of Joe, you'll easily run under $10. Everything arrives as if it were a *Saturday Evening Post* cover: no garnish or fancy presentation, just good, solid food like Grandma used to make. The toast always drips with butter, the bacon crispy, eggs delightfully runny, and the hashbrowns expertly grilled to be crunchy on the outside and moist inside. The service is familiar and friendly — a true sanctuary for fans of a better time and a better breakfast.

BEST OVER THE TOP BRUNCH

Meritage at the Claremont

41 Tunnel Rd., Berkeley, 510-549-0510
MeritageClaremont.com

That its view through a row of grand windows is one of the East Bay's best — a surreal(ist)ly supersize panorama including palms, bridges, peaks, tennis courts, silver-blue bay and shimmering metropolis — gives the Meritage impeccable brunch-spot status even before your first forkful of saffron-stained salmon, Chioggia beets with goat cheese, sage-apple-chicken sausages, roasted duck-and-Portobello-mushroom [illegible] main, sweet-pepper hash, crab stuffed red-velvet cupcakes, quadruple-fudge chocolate cake with a pistachio-fluff layer, and the dozens of other dishes served all-you-can-eat buffet-style. Soft jazz music in a historic lady. Moorish-influenced space makes the first glass champagne taste even smoother and softens the blow of the $55-per-person price tag. The Meritage opened last November in the lush Claremont Resort, a local landmark since it opened in 1915. Executive chef Josh Thoreen, a Culinary Institute of America grad whose last gigs included Yountville's celebrated French Laundry, visits farmers' markets on Fridays and Saturdays to plan menus for his Sunday brunches.

BEST BELLY BUSTING BRUNCH

The Sunny Side Café

1689 Solano Ave., Albany, 510-527-5388 2136 Oxford St., Berkeley, 510-845-9900
TheSunnySideCafe.com

It's no shock that the East Bay would be home to an "eco-chef" run certified green restaurant where just about everything on the menu is organic and specific items are even marked as "Low Carbon Emission" choices. What you might not expect is that that restaurant The Sunny Side Cafe, would also boast one of the most decadent belly-busting sweet and brunchless around. Consider the "Alameda" one of Chef Aaron French's signature dishes (also available on the restaurant's daily breakfast menu): an enormous savory "sandwich"

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Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST SALADS

Cafe Fay's pomodoro salad

I'm shouting...this is just one salad but what a salad. It is the perfect lunch — a big mound of fresh mixed greens draped with the best Italian prosciutto and topped with thin slices of parmesan cheese. With Asian lavash toasts on the side. The dressing is the perfect blend of olive oil and slightly tart vinegar — thus with one of Fay's great lattes is the perfect midday meal. — *jamais magnanen peddle*

Cafe Rosso

Simple goat cheese and greens salad. — *arianaf*

Cafe Gratitude

What inside down. — *hyou*

Intermezzo

Or whatever the new name is. — *this schultz*

BEST SANDWICHES

Bakesale Betty

Ahhh! the egg salad w/ arugula — *Blythe*

Brown Cow Deli Cafe

— *oliveharris.s*

Cass Fleming

Best Banh Mi at great price. — *stark*

Chez Bar

THE best burger I've ever had. Their other sandwiches are amazing as well — *davidmp66*

Europa Delicatessen

Oh my god, the Reuben sandwich. — *Stephen Buel*

Saul's Deli

The Pastrami!!! — *Brielle Haffinan*

The Bread Room

Vegan sandwiches! — *hayes*

A zombie of awesome food and prime people-watching, Sunday brunch at the Thai Temple is a quintessential Berkeley experience. Benefiting the thirty-year-old Buddhist temple whose backyard hosts it, the weekly event draws a true cross-section of Berkeley residents — starving university students, Telegraph punks, and ex-hippie soccer moms — for good authentic, and hearty, Thai food. The soups and curries come in both meat and veggie versions, and $10 will get you a good-size plate of food, dessert, and Thai iced tea. Get there when it first opens at 10 a.m. to beat the lines and find a spot among the inevitably crowded communal picnic benches among the gardens.

BEST BEIGNET

Angeline's Louisiana Kitchen

2261 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1900, AngelinesKitchen.com

If there is a God and He created Man in his image, then He must have fashioned beignets after the pillow he rested on during the seventh day. To put it simply: these French doughnuts are heaven, and Angeline's has cornered the market on doughy utopia. Fried to order, this dessert arrives at the table as fluffy, hot squares almost hidden in a massive pile of powdered sugar. What may seem like an obscene amount of sugar is actually a carefully planned construction. The heat from the doughnuts melts one layer to create a slight glaze and the top of the mountain crumbles in on itself—the first sign of a fork, ensuring sugar touches every bite. After a big dinner of gumbo and po' boys, the light and airy dough will satiate your sweet tooth, so you can drift to sleep with a touch of the dessert's divine intervention.

BEST UNCONVENTIONAL WAFFLES

Sfoof's Woofle Cafe

2594 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, 510-548-0118, Sfoofs.com

Meals and desserts rolled into one, waffles are sweet but not too sweet. They're light, fluffy and warm, with spoons begging to be filled. At Sfoof's, where they're called "woofles," they can be filled with oodles of different sweet or savory delights, and oodles more can be baked right into the batter. Customers choose Cold Stone Creamery style from among 27 choices including pecans, coffee beans, chocolate cheesecake, almonds, blueberries, Fruity Pebbles, hummus, pesto, olives, cinnamon, allspice, bananas, beefy chili, garlic, and Armenian *sujuk* sausage. Owner Heda Cox grew up in Lebanon, in a diplomat's household where huge banquets were frequent affairs — and where she learned to cook from her mother, who baked for such celebrities as Dwight Eisenhower. Chocolate woofles-on-a-stick are. Fudgy. Puppies: their savory, woofle-swathed meat-and-cheese cousins are Pesto Pups, Bacon Pups, and Corn Pups. Coconuts only: local, organic ingredients — and gluten-free woofles are an extra plus.

BEST UNCONVENTIONAL BRUNCH

Wat Mongkolratanaram

1911 Russell St., Berkeley, 510-849-3419

in which ham, roasted tomatoes, mushrooms, cheese, over-easy eggs, and Hollandaise sauce get friendly with each other between two slices of French toast. It is a thing of beauty and enough calories to keep you going all day long. Not enough food for you? For $29, try Sunny Side's special breakfast tasting menu for two, a multi-course extravaganza that includes reduced (but not small) portions of nearly all of that week's seasonal brunch specials. There's usually some kind of pancake or French toast, a benedict, some sort of scrambled egg dish, and more — not to mention your choice of orange juice or mimosa.

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- Michael Bauer, SF Chronicle

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HCWChickenAndWaffles.com

The most important part of a building is the foundation upon which everything else rests. For the South's greatest architecture, chicken and waffles, the same principle applies. Without a good waffle, the dish can just fall apart under scrutiny. Originally a Roscoe's Chicken and Waffles franchisee, the Home of Chicken and Waffles understands that just because the waffle is a vessel for moist chicken and sticky syrup, doesn't mean it should take second billing. This but sturdy, the base can hold up against a piece of meat in weight and texture. Like a supporting actor who makes the headliner shine, the waffles in Jack London Square are wrongfully appreciated as an afterthought. While people may immediately point their knife and fork toward the fried skyscrapers, the deep pockets filled with syrup and hot sauce will not let them down in their silent unsung culinary duty.

BEST CHICKEN FOR CHICKEN AND WAFFLES

900 Grayson

900 Grayson St., Berkeley, 510-704-0900
900Grayson.com

In many world cuisines, spicy and sweet are married on a regular basis but Americans tend to separate the two as if they were mortal enemies. For this reason chicken and waffles, particularly the use of hot sauce and syrup to season them is an experience giggling gourmands whisper about amongst themselves. Syrup is a natural accompaniment to waffles, but adding hot sauce seems to trip many newcomers up. The Demon Lover at 900 Grayson takes care of that by bringing the heat not in the sauce but in the batter for the chicken. The chicken breast is soaked in buttermilk and then tossed in a mixture of flour and spices so as the oil begins to crisp the batter it also lets out the heat. Juicy and crunchy the chicken shows beginners how sweet and spicy play nicely with each other. Moreover for chicken and waffle vets, it's an extra kick to go along with the endless dashes of hot sauce that inevitably snare the plate.

BEST GRITS

Aunt Mary's Cafe

4307 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-601-0227
AuntMarysCafe.com

For those of us who grew up in California, grits are not only delicious, but exotic. And now this Southern delight has arrived in Temescal, as part of the menu at Aunt Mary's Cafe on Telegraph. These grits have got just the right texture: soft but substantive. They stick to the fork but go down easy. Try them with greens, or order add-ons like crawfish tomatoes, cheese, or smoked bacon. From whence does this nubrown mane? Dallas native Jack Stewart opened Aunt Mary's a few years ago and named it for his Georgia born and -bred maternal aunt- he himself is a twenty-year veteran chef who's done stints at Aqua and Rose Pistola in San Francisco. As for the restaurant it has a similar feel to the grits — mellow and smooth — plus a friendly, waitstaff and a roomy dining area. There's nothing gritty about Aunt Mary's, just hash plates of creamy cornmeal.

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST SEAFOOD

Fried Fish
Crockett — brookeAnne

Scallops
From Monterey Fish Market — dirk dirk

Jacks Takeout
Garlic Cash. Cracked tempura battered in the shell deep fried, then tossed in a hot wok with garlic and jalapeno's. OMG! DELISH! So glad everyone doesn't know about this place...Oops they do NOW! — zark

Marlins
Chris Cheung is a culinary genius! — starbrooke29

BEST SOUTHERN/SOUL FOOD

Brown Sugar Kitchen
Oakland should be proud to have this destination restaurant. Tanya Holland is sharing the love in her little spot in West Oakland. There are crowds every weekend for a reason! — Fiorito

House of Chicken and Waffles
Added benefit of being open until 3. — Oaksenior

Bentley Vegan
I'm sure people automatically take it out of the non-vegan categories but it really should up to carnivorous and food restaurants! — mr.whitebook

BEST STEAKS

Luke's Top Bones Rib Eye.
Just order one and then you tell me. ;-) — DangerGirl2000

BEST DINER

Rico's Diner

400 15th St., Oakland, 510-444-8424

Few would accuse the Bay Area of not being sufficiently hip from a culinary standpoint, but sometimes you're not in the mood for raw food or molecular gastronomy or obscure ethnic cuisines. Sometimes all you want is food that's warm and familiar- a taste of your childhood, a taste of home. Of course every culture has its own definition of "comfort food," but Rico's Diner should please everyone from displaced Texans to visiting New Englanders with its menu which covers the whole gamut of American classics. burgers, country-fried steak, pot roast, and meatloaf that's even called Mom's MacMeat! The Downtown Oakland spot takes familiar diner fare and ups the ante by using high-quality ingredients (e.g. Acme buns) and executing everything on the menu with uncommon skill. The Rico's Burger ($6.75) is a hefty, perfectly balanced thing with a bit of beef from jalapenos and fried onions for texture. The French fries are miraculously crisp and greaseless. And the chocolate banana milkshake ($3.75), with satisfying chunks of fresh banana is one of the best milkshakes in town.

BEST OF THE EAST BAY
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BEST BREAKFAST BURRITO

Original Pollo

100 Berkeley Sq., Berkeley, 510-486-8007

There's probably no better breakfast after a night on the town than Original Pollo in Berkeley. It's not Bay Area-fourteen, but also not Denny's-style greasy — just real, delicious food. In the morning, the breakfast burrito is the star of the show with a choice of bacon or sausage on top of eggs and salsa and home fries. Sure that sounds like your basic breakfast burrito but it is not because it tastes better than all the others. The taco shop right off the downtown Berkeley BART station has been there for 23 years, and although it seems a little touristy at first glance with the cabin-style wood paneling and a mod set string of Christmas lights by the cash register- but the atmosphere somehow manages to be quiet without being dead, which makes it the best place in a city center to take in the morning in peace. It also serves all sorts of sandwiches and entree plates, including gyros and kebabs, in case you're the industrious type who manages to be in the second or third meal by midafternoon.

BEST NEW COFFEE SHOP

Local 123

2040 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-647-5270
Local123Cafe.com

The owners of Local 123 bet the farm when they opened this place a little more than a year ago. They chose a space as large, as most chain cafes- decided to serve only locally sourced, changing menu of locally sourced eatables; contracted East Bay artisans to create lamps and furnishings- and went all the way to Humboldt to find Flying Goat, the roastery they felt would allow them to make the best coffee possible — because that above all, was what mattered to them most. And it's paid off. Sure, they now serve regional beer and wine on tap screen movies, and host workshops in jamming and urban gardening. And their art curator should probably be working in a museum. But the coffee is still the star- the president, and the spoiled youngest child all rolled up in one. They filter-drip coffee by the cup, grind and hand-tamp espresso drinks to order and cold-brew their iced coffee for 24 hours. And if they're not too busy, they'll answer your coffee questions. Because they want you to love, understand, and appreciate coffee every bit as much as they do.

BEST TEA HOUSE

Imperial Tea Court

Epicurious Garden 1511 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-540-8888, ImperialTea.com

This is not your rinsed pinky dolly-laden, English high tea shop. This is a traditional China tea room and the tea is plentiful and strong, the food savory and the prices reasonable. Your first impression is red — old, dark colored lacquer tables, chairs, and cabinets. The tea is prepared the traditional way — first, the vessels are warmed, then the tea is rinsed with



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hot water (to open the leaves), then steeped in small ceramic teapots. As the friendly server goes through the ritual, you learn how the steps bring out the tea's full flavor. And what teas! Black teas, green teas, white teas, oolongs, and herbal teas (tisanes). But nothing is like the Court's extensive selection of aged Puerh teas — dark, deep, earthy black teas that will bring you back again and again. So will the food. A dozen dim sum offerings, handmade pot stickers, Beijing-style beef stew, hand-pulled noodles, and an addictive crunchy chocolate walnut. (Think chocolate wrapped in a sesame dough and deep-fried.) And it's affordable: A party of three with tea, pot stickers, onion cakes, dessert and a traditional (gongfu) presentation runs about $40.

BEST PLACE FOR FOOD PAIRED WITH WINE (NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND)

The Restaurant at Wente Vineyard

5050 Arroyo Rd., Livermore, 925-456-2450, WenteVineyards.com

It should be no surprise that the centerpiece of the dining room at the Restaurant at Wente Vineyards is a wine barrel. But far every season, that barrel adds more to the dining experience than good feng shui. During the week-long barrel wine dinner series, servers dip a long glass tube into the oak, sucking Merlot or Syrah or whatever the winery's brand new release is from the barrel and releasing it into your glass. The $39 three-course prix-fixe dinner is designed to match the flavors of the wine, rather than the other way around — a serious feat for Chef Eric Berg, who must essentially guess what the as-yet released wine will taste like. The food, of course, is seasonal and grown in the restaurant's garden out back. Last spring, Chef Berg put grass-fed lamb and fava beans together with the Grenache Syrah, and Mourvedre GSM. Before that he paired pork and spinach with a Grenache. This August, he takes on the Sonata Cabernet-Syrah blend.

BEST LOUNGE AMBIENCE

Liege

481 9th St., Oakland, 510-835-4343, LiegeOakland.com

Tucked among the 19th-century brick and cast iron of Old Oakland is Liege, a strikingly handsome lounge for 21st-century sophisticates, nightlife mavens, and sports fans. There's something to capture the eye no matter where you look: the wrought wire chandeliers, the hand-crafted pine floor, the tabletop replicas of Oakland muscle cars, the ceiling covered in cherry-blossom/sports-car mural, the gorgeous oil-pressed tin ceiling. The candlelit nook with sofas, armchairs, and an ethanol fireplace is a fine place to relax and imbibe; the bar itself is all exposed brick and inlaid wood. Two muted flat-screen TVs don't interfere with the tightly throbbing sound design, and an eclectic array of knickknacks and *objets d'art* accent the corners and crannies. The carefully crafted house cocktails, meanwhile, are potent, inventive, and delectable. Chess, dominoes, and a photo booth are available when you get tired of lounging.

BEST NEW BAR

The Layover

1517 Franklin St., 510-834-1517, OaklandLayover.com

Sometimes a bar is just a bar. You stop in for a drink after work, or spend an evening with friends playing football and polishing pitchers of Guinness. Sometimes a bar is really a club — a pick-up joint, a Saturday-night destination, a place to be seen. And sometimes a bar is neither or both; it's a community hangout, a gathering point, a 21st-century Grange hall. That's the Layover. The place opened in Downtown Oakland late last year, and a few minutes spent inside leave little doubt about it: emanating from the boldly upholstered furniture, the richly colored linens, the modern-exotic light

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST TACO TRUCK

El Novillo

The only taco truck I've been to in Fruitvale whose guacamole is worth the extra cash. — *shawby*

Right outside Jeremiahs

Right before the Ashby on ramp. — *jaytothomas*

Similies

E14 and 22nd Ave. Orange Truck. — *Oakmarker*

The Taco Guys

Delicious organic tacos locally sourced, inventive combinations too. — *bonat*

Zanotto's Parking Lot at High Street

In this summer this taco truck grills meat and green onions in the open: the food is amazing! — *BerkELM*

BEST TAKE-OUT FOOD

La Méditerranée

You can eat there too but getting their food take-out is a great dinner party at home. — *kathyk*

BEST TEAHOUSE

Tamam

This place is extraordinary. It's the best tea house in the entire Bay Area. Don't miss it. — *zorro*

BEST THAI/LAO/BURMESE RESTAURANT

Burma Superstar

This place is delicious though really crazily really those guys need to invest in some soundproofing! That place is the loudest restaurant I've ever been in! Not a good date or conversation spot because of this! — *mr.salamibomb*

Champa Garden

Hands down! Best everything. — *NinaJ*

Thai Cafe

Hands down the best Thai food in the East Bay — *pavlovsmug*

Vulcan Thai Cafe

Vulcan Art Studios San Leandro Blvd. — *bobbigbum*









ing, and the casual seating, the vibe seems perfect to relax, to share, to open up — even with strangers. The drinks are neither low-brow nor high-brow; they exist to lubricate social interaction, not dominate it. Regular events include DJ nights, live music nights (featuring members of Rogue Wave, Crown City Rockers, and more), and Lay over Comedy Night, where comedians of various stripes test their mettle before accommodating, though nonetheless real crowds. You'll never know — or maybe you could — from the blank street sign out front, featuring only a glowing neon inclined glass. This place is the real deal.

BEST DIVE BAR

The Graduate

6202 Claremont Ave Oakland, 510-655-8647

Dive bars are a dime a dozen in the East Bay but discerning what, exactly the difference is between any old trashy bar and the kind of trashy bar that keeps its regulars coming back night after night is both difficult and highly subjective. For that reason explaining what sets The Graduate so far apart from all the others is difficult but let s start with this: $1.50 PBR. Beyond that there is the free popcorn which is self-serve, seemingly bottomless, and best smothered in the Sriracha that accompanies it. There s the chantele — eclectic unpretentious and extremely loyal a mix of blue-collar locals, grad students, and, of course, hipsters. There s the location, a nestled on a quiet corner far enough from campus to avoid being completely overwhelmed by undergrads. But the real draw here, as at any good dive, is the dirt-cheap drinks. In addition to the aforementioned PBR, the Grad offers $1 pitchers $4 well drinks, and, for students, $3 pints of Sierra Nevada.

BEST FORMER DIVE BAR

Heart and Dagger Saloon

504 Lake Park Ave Oakland 510-444-7300
HeartAndDaggerSaloon.com

Formerly the sometimes-sketchy Serenader the newly reopened and remodeled Heart and Dagger Saloon (also under new ownership) is a great spot to go out and have a few drinks. With an awesome beer garden under the shade of a lemon tree it s a prime place to spend a lazy Sunday afternoon or wild Saturday night. There s a great rock n roll jukebox, pool tables, and pinball and even Ms. Pac Man. The drinks are affordable, and the staff and clientele are jovial. Best of all, this bar seems to have broken from the hipster mold as a place where people from all walks of life can come together to enjoy a drink or two and have a good time without breaking the bank.

MOST CHARMING BAR OWNER

Kim

Kim s Backyard, 2424 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-834-8624, KimsBackyard@Oakland.com

Sure, the High Life bottles cost $4 each, and a well-brand screwdriver sets you back $6. But a night at Kim s is a night like none other. It s a Rainbow bar in the heart of Koreatown — itself wedged between Temescal and Uptown — and the clientele reflects this, with regulars ranging from forty-and-over African Americans to



Best belly-busting brunch The Sunny Side Café — Melissa Barnes

scruffy white hipsters, and many Oaklanders in-between. The big screen TV airs sports and classic movies the flow of freshly naked popcorn is endless, the titular backyard has ample room for cigarette smokers, the internet jukebox blares R&B and classic rock and acid and, on a weekend night, there's a good chance that a dance party could break out in the walkway between the bar and the tables. But the joint's real gem is Kim herself, cognac in hand. You may take her for a sweet old lady but do not cross her. Kim can buy you shots as easily as kick you out, so show some respect. Don't smoke herb out back, don't drop your drink inside, and don't complain about the prices. When Kim joins you on the dance floor to shake it to R. Kelly or the B-52s, you'll realize cheap drinks aren't everything.

BEST FUNKY JOINT WHERE YOU CAN STILL DRINK BEER AND SMOKE

The Pub

1482 Solano Ave Albany 510-525-1900

Imagine coming home and finding your parents have turned their living room into a beer and tobacco bar and you d have The Pub, the easygoing, down-home establishment — and proud monument to bad habits — that s been on the Albany side of busy Solano Avenue since the mid 1950s. At The Pub you can buy fine pipe and cigarette tobacco, along with hand-crafted pipes to smoke it in or papers with which to roll your own. Once your pipe is full or cigarette rolled you can sip a pint of one of half dozen or so tap beers on sale. (There are even walking sticks for purchase adding a flavor of a 19th-century Parisian cafe to the atmosphere.) Note that smoking is only allowed on the front patio or the cozy rear patio. The two main areas have comfortable couches and chairs for reading, bulling around with friends about the state of the world, or playing any one of more than a dozen board games. Or you can simply sit and stare on a sunny sleepy weekend afternoon.

BEST PLACE TO DISMEMBER THE DEAD

Kona Club

4401 Piedmont Ave Oakland, 510-654-7100
KonaClub.net

There are several good reasons to stop by the Kona Club the tiki-style bar on Piedmont Avenue that replaced the late great Kings X a few years back. First the location. Within walking distance of Mountain View Cemetery the Chapel of the Chimes, St. Mary's Cemetery, and the Oakland Columbarium, the Kona Club is a perfect spot to have a few in tribute after saying final farewells to the dearly departed. Second, even if you aren't in mourning or pondering other grave matters — even if you don't care for tiki style — your spirits may be lifted into friendly, air-conditioned conversation with the bartenders and locals who call the Kona their second living room. The Kona Club, one of the three bars owned by Doug Miller (along with Thalassa in Berkeley and The Mallard in Albany), offers a large menu of tiki drinks, along with a decently priced selection of single malt whiskies. You should especially go take advantage afternoon when, usually around 6 p.m., the wheeled eatery Jon's Truck Eats sets up shop just outside the door. And, yes you can take your order into the bar.

BEST TROPICAL COCKTAIL

Bobo Brazil at César Latino

4029 Piedmont Ave Oakland, 510-985-1200
BarCesar.com

Swaying palms, ocean breezes, the scent of coconut oil and the white-bikini mosaic of sand sea and sky all that s missing is the tall glass of ice-frosted, and speared pineapple a tiny umbrella tilting jauntily from the rim. Classics like the Singapore Sling, the Frozen Daiquiri, Planter s Punch, and Oakland's own Mai Tai are all excellent options at cocktail time but César Latino s newfangled Bobo Brazil is a worthy addition to the canon. As the name suggests, the drink s primary rocket fuel is cachaça the Brazilian sugarcane hooch that makes caipirinhas so mood-enhancing. Combined with coconut, orange juice, and ginger syrup and whipped into a tropical frenzy it s sweet and creamy and hallucinogenic all at once, an ideal companion to the venue s boos and empanadas. Enjoy them out on the front patio and pretend you're in Bahia instead of Oakland.

BEST PISCO SOUR

Sidebar

542 Grand Ave Oakland, 510-452-9500,
Sidebar Oakland.com

Here s a popular pisco sour is the au courant drink of the East Bay and a couple of establishments, most notably Bocanova in Jack London Square and Adesso, the rocking Piedmont Avenue corner restaurant, do respectable ones worth sampling. But the restaurant/bar with the absolute best pisco sour in the entire East Bay is Sidebar the warm and exceptional Grand Avenue hangout with a convivial copper-topped bar and delicious food and beverages. The classiest pisco sour is good, sure, but it s not quite extraordinary as the "locavore" pisco sour ($8) Sidebar mixologists, akin to a modern-day mad-scientists armed with a topsy-turvy day-lousy molecular dropper turn Marian Farms Organic pisco (brandy, really) plus lime juice, sugar Angostura bitters, artisan Small Hands Gum Syrup( ), and whipped raw egg white into the tastiest most refreshing, liveliest libation this side of South America.

BEST ISLAND GETAWAY

Hibiscus

1745 San Pablo Ave Oakland 510-444-2626,



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HibiscusOakland.com

South Kirwan's Hibiscus is an oasis of Caribbean swelter amid the cool nightspots of Oakland's revitalized Uptown. Once inside the restaurant's moody lounge you'll feel like you've been transported to some West Indies rendezvous: worn wood, humbleborn glass, the thrum of reggae, and hookcases lined with tropical lit-ic-a-ture inspire the sipping of a tall, cool cocktail from the inviting bar. In the wicker-lined dining room you can enjoy Kirwan's angular cuisine, which is part organic/sustainable California, but mostly the spicy flavors of her native Dominica. The crab and pepper pot soup, salt cod fritters, fried plantains, and okra callaloo are all delicious, but don't pass up the terrific fried chicken, a recipe handed down from Kirwan's grandmother. The mood is hip yet friendly; there's Red Stripe on the beer list, and the New Parish is right next door when you're ready for the return voyage.



Bend Brace semi Sidebar

Chris Kirby

BEST PLACE TO VIEW THE LAKE

Lake Chalet Seafood Bar & Grill

1520 Lakeside Dr., Oakland 510-208-LAKE

TheLakeChalet.com

This place to show off the East Bay used to be the Claremont's Paragon deck. These days the place to be is Lake Chalet Seafood Bar & Grill. The $22-million renovation to the old ornamental boathouse is stunning with mahogany, marble, hardwood floors, and open and semi-open kitchen and bar action. Practically every dining room, bars deck, grill, nook, and cranny in the stylish 10,000-square-foot redo offers a spectacular view of Oakland's pride and joy, Lake Merritt. Runners, sailors, and shallots have long known the joys of Lake Merritt. Geese and other migratory birds and wildlife enjoy residence on the tidal estuary. Now the rest of us who also want to enjoy the bounty of the lake can do so comfortably — in our knickers, under red umbrellas outdoors at Lake Chalet. Or sit chillier times, indoors to the nearby crackle of a roaring fire and a window view of the serene lake. At dusk, a visitor sipping a local brew fine wine or fancy specialty cocktail might see an elegant gondola glide past as the Necklace of Lights outlining the bucolic lake's perimeter reflects off the water. It's a beautiful sight from any Lake Chalet vantage point.

BEST UNEXPECTED RESTAURANT SETTING

BoilerHouse Restaurant

1414 Harbour Way South, Richmond. 510-215-6000

BoilerHouseRestaurant.com

We've seen restaurants in sidelined railway cars, restaurants in abandoned quarryworks, and restaurants in desanctified churches, but BoilerHouse is the only restaurant we know of that's located in an old Ford assembly plant. And not just any Ford assembly plant, but the biggest on the Pacific Coast: 525,000 square feet of mass production along the shores of Richmond Inner Harbor. The restaurant is inside one wing of a huge pier-side hangar where boilers were housed and cranes lifted goods from ships into the factory. Today the meticulously restored expanse of industrial deco is a dazzling place to enjoy breakfast, sliders, or well-crafted cocktails. Vintage factory sash windows and sawtooth skylights let in plenty of natural light. The open kitchen, dining room and centrally located bar are accented with gears, pulleys, chains and levers reminiscent of the vanished glory days. And expansive touches like Terrazzo tabletops and terra cotta flooring complement the prominently displayed old boilers, now painted a gleaming silver. After your meal don't forget to stroll down to the wharf and take in the panorama of the bay, the islands, and the city in the distance.

BEST LUNCH AND DINNER IN A WEIRD LOCATION, WITH CHEETHES

Wally's Cafe

3906 San Pablo Ave., Emeryville 510-547-1308

Tucked away behind the Bank Club (which used to be a card joint like the Oaks but is now just a bar, sometimes a very loud one) is an horseshoe counter with stool seating. Sit down and either Wally or one of his friendly employees will greet you with a bowl of hot, spicy lentil soup. No you didn't order it, nor did you order the baklava that will arrive with your bill. Tuck to you're in good hands with this crew. Wally bills the fare as "Mediterranean & More" and that's an understatement. What other restaurant offers ham/turkey/salami panini sandwiches, ground sirloin burgers, onion rings, chicken kebabs, and Greek salad on a short laminated list? The chicken kebab, marinated in olive oil, oregano, garlic, pepper and more, is $11.99; the lamb $13.99 (both come with a half-plate of Greek salad, rice pilaf studded with carrots, and lemon dollops of a very strong garlic spread and yogurt/cucumber salad). Stick to veggie-land with a falafel or Greek salad for $5.99 — such a deal considering that delicious soup you didn't order packed with rice, lentils, carrots, garlic, onion, dried chiles, and other spices. During the summer, you can sit out on the side patio under an umbrella. You're gazing not at the blue of the Mediterranean but at cars zipping up and down San Pablo, but who cares? Cashew baklava hand-made by Wally is in your immediate future, ready or not.

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BEST UNEXPECTED FOOD CART

Friday Night Persian Dinners at Woodminster Cafe

5021 Woodminster Lane, Oakland 510-530-1651

From the outside, Woodminster Cafe looks like your typical sandwich/panini shop tucked away in a tiny mini-strip shopping plaza. During the day, the cafe is a good spot for neighborhood folks who want a solid all-American burger or a garlicky chicken-salad sandwich. But on Friday evenings during the summer (from 5:00 to 7:30), the family that runs the restaurant serves up dreamy home-cooked Persian dinners. Whether you order a bright, vinegary Iranian salad, the falling-off-the-bone-tender whole lamb shank ($12.95), or one of the spectacular lamb stews ($11.95, all running weekly between what the unmitigated might refer to simply as "the green one" — herby and fragrant with parsley — and "the red one," which is a delightful amalgamation of succulent eggplant and crispy potatoes), you really can't go wrong. The food is soulful and satisfying and just about the last thing you'd expect to find smack in the middle of the stodgy suburbs known and visited mostly by residents of the Oakland Hills. The dinners are a great bike-out option, too, but call ahead to reserve your order even if you plan on dining in. The stews in particular tend to sell out before they've even started that night's dinner service.

BEST SEMI-REGULAR FOOD EVENT (WEATHER PERMITTING)

Chop Bar's Monthly Pig Roast

247 4th St., Oakland. 510-444-2467

ChopBarSF.com

Is there a lovelier thing than a whole roasted pig? Not when it's roasted with as much skill and love as the guys who run Oakland's Chop Bar. For a few months now, chef-owners Jesse Branscombe and Lev Delbuy have been hosting a monthly pig roast at their restaurant, a few blocks from Jack London Square, and it's quickly becoming one of the most popular local events in the city. Buy your $12 meal ticket at the window outside and, if you've arrived early (a good idea to beat the crowds), wait patiently until dinner is ready and laid out buffet style. Watching them cart out the whole pig is a great theater so feel free to take out your cell phone and snap some pictures! In addition to a fairly generous portion of pork, you'll also get several seasonal sides, maybe some lightly dressed greens, a potato salad, housemade flatbread, and several different kinds of salsa. But the real star is the pig itself: with its perfectly tender meat deeply charred crisp skin, and tasty gelatinous bits. Check the restaurant's web site to see when the next pig roast will be held, and since it's tough to roast a whole pig indoors, keep an eye on the weather forecast.

BEST TAKEOUT

La Bedaine

1585 Solano Ave., Berkeley. 510-559-8201

LaBedaine.com

With a distinctively cheerful yellow awning and an excellent stock of prepared food items, La Bedaine has emerged as real neighborhood favorite since it opened last year in North Berkeley. The shop's name literally means "workshop" and, according to Chef Alain Delangle, it's what the French call a "traiteur" (or caterer). It's not quite a charcuterie, not quite a pastry shop, but combines elements of both — a place where customers can buy both savory and sweet items. At La Bedaine, you can pick up a sandwich for lunch — a baguette topped with pork *rillettes* or pâté, all made in-house. You can choose from a wide variety of pastries and other desserts, most pinned too low to be true, including the best tart tartin in town. You also can pick up a package of smoked salmon or smoked sausages (both $4) that will likely be the best you've ever had. And perhaps the most


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BEST ICE CREAM OR GELATO

Lush Gelato

4184 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-547-1299;
1511 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-665-0646
Lushgelato.blogspot.com

With lines out the wazoo at many a Bay Area ice cream or gelato shop, it's easy to be cynical when yet another store opens claiming to make its frozen confections in small batches with local ingredients. But as far as artisan gelato is concerned, relative newcomer Lush Gelato is one shop that actually delivers the goods, producing gelato that is unrivaled in terms of both the luxurious creaminess of its mouthfeel as well as the purity and intensity of its flavor. Frederico Murtagh, the owner and resident gelato master, is a veritable genius when it comes to distilling the essence of, say, a grapefruit or basil or a spoonful of crème fraîche into a batch of gelato or sorbetto. For many of the gelateria's best flavors, Murtagh draws inspiration from his native Argentina — the dulce de leche gelato, in particular, is to die for. Both of Lush's East Bay locations boast friendly employees who are generous with samples, and the shop's policy of allowing customers to split a scoop between two different flavors is great for both the budget-conscious and the indecisive.

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST VEGETARIAN/VEGAN RESTAURANT

Caffe Gentile
What a special place. So unique and full of love and being present when eating. Most of us humans take that for granted. Not here.) — *peacefulrun*

Gather
Not veg but very veg friendly — best place to take a veg if you're not veg. — *kfingerman*

Mezzanella
Go when Tenaea is the cook. M-F lunch — *lynnwoods*

Veggie Fiesta
She remembers what you ordered the time before — *Chanidrika*

BEST VIETNAMESE/CAMBODIAN RESTAURANT

Kangaroo Pho
Yeah it's staffed by Koreans but they have a Vietnamese chef who makes good pho — *nicnic*

Best Vietnamese/Cambodian Restaurant

Pho Hoa
Pho show!! — *lunatree*

Best Vietnamese/Cambodian Restaurant

Rang Dong
Since at least the Sixties. Still great. — *spyguy*

MOST COMMUNAL COMMUNAL TABLES

Acanella's
Seats 22 made from reclaimed wood from a barge — you can see the dark stains from the minerals in the water — *Acanella*

Camino
This question was designed for Camino right? — *dekirk*

BEST FANCY DESSERTS

Bellanico Restaurant

4238 Park Blvd., Oakland, 510-336-1180
Bellanico.net

Even just the menu, *Formaggio e Dolci*, qualifies as food porn, with inducements like *Cantucci* pistachio-chocolate-hazelnut biscotti almond cookie *brutti ma buoni* espresso shortbread." (That's one dessert, not a list of many.) Bombolon, elegant Florentine doughnuts, necessitate total brain realignment where doughnuts are concerned. Cheesecake made of goat's milk is enervated with pistachio brittle and counterbalanced with fresh strawberries. The texture of the cheesecake is dense and unrefined in the best way. *Affogato* is brought to the table with a dainty miniature pitcher of espresso, ready to be poured over the gelato (chocolate, vanilla or a scoop of each). The shortbread served alongside is a falsely modest cookie, not to a casual shape and speckled with espresso, sandy crumbly and only faintly sweet. Bellanico is one of the new additions to Glenview's nascent gourmet ghetto, and the crowds outside on Saturday nights suggest it's stealing the show. Chef Jonathan Lace is a publicly declared "dessertarian," and with a median price of $7, his luxury goods are affordable as well.

BEST RAW DESSERT

Buttercup Grill & Bar

2295 Broadway, Oakland, 510-444-2878;
1000 Contra Sl., Oakland, 510-526-1660;
Buttercupgrillandbar.com

By definition, any raw dessert is a great dessert. But at Buttercup, the desserts are based on recipes crafted and taste-tested to perfection by Debbie Shahvar, who cofounded the five-location East Bay restaurant group with her husband, David, in 1988. James Beard Award–nominated cookbook author Shahvar feels that food is a form of self-expression — and that desserts are one of the most profound ways to show people you love them. She also believes that the memory of dessert is what resonates the most intensely after a meal, because it's the last course. At all Buttercup locations, the Loyalty Club — aka the Crispy Creamy Chewy Crunchy Dessert of the Month Club — allows diners to score free desserts on every tenth visit.



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BEST ALL AMERICAN DESSERTS

Peach Cobbler and Pecan Pie at Phat Matt's BBQ

3415 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-879-7294, PhatMattsBBQ.com

You can keep your crepes Suzette, *sacher torte*, tiramisu, and gooseberry fool when it comes to dessert we'll take the simply soul satisfying sweets of the American South any day. Two top examples of this crowded genre are peach cobbler and pecan pie, and coincidentally enough the best local versions of each are both served at Phat Matt's, a barbecue joint on a gritty corner of Oakland. Their cobbler stars the sort of sweet, ripe peaches that leave a dribble of juice running down your chin topped off with a moist, buttery crumble that adds just a bit of crunch to the luscious fruit. And the house pecan pie is unlike any you'll ever experience: The kitchen employs brown sugar in the filling instead of corn syrup, so you end up with something approaching a big, buttery Louisiana praline wrapped in a pastry shell. The Texas brisket and the pulled pork are pretty damned good, too.

BEST NEW AMERICAN CUISINE

Five

2086 Allston Way, Berkeley, 510-225-5055, Five-Berkeley.com

Whether you're defining New American cooking as the California cuisine/Alice Waters ethos applied to classic American dishes or comfort food raised to a new upscale cutting-edge standard, Five is one of the best places in the Bay Area to savor it. Chef Scott Howard cooks up inventive yet soulful variations on American grub out of fresh, organic, seasonal ingredients and a unique talent for balance and brio. Vivac Tomales Bay oysters roasted Rockefeller style with brandy, shallots, spinach, and Monterey jack mac 'n cheese crafted from orzo, smoked gouda, braised chanterelles, and tomato preserves, a fork-tender short-rib pot roast with glazed turnips, chive biscuits and cheddar potato gratin...a perfectly pink and juicy lamb loin, wild mushroom strudel on the side. Desserts include a lush butterscotch pudding ribboned with bits of peanut brittle and a molten chocolate fudge cake jazzed with Black Mission figs and lavender crème anglaise. Makes you feel positively patriotic.

Chronicle Wine Writers' Finalist

BEST PLACE TO GO ON A DATE WHEN ONE OF YOU IS VEGETARIAN AND THE OTHER WANTS SOME BLOOD
Gather
— kjaperman

BEST NEW RESTAURANT
Up and Under in Point Richmond
— April Wood

BEST WI-FI SHACK
Animal Cafe
Even though Sal says they aren't an other wi fi shack, I think they are awesome. *— rgavin*

BEST KARAOKE BAR
The Melody El Cerrito
— igorsaw

FRIENDLIEST BUSINESS OWNER
Cecil Dunlap, Awaken Cafe
— shakeup2bfly5

MOST BALANCED KID'S MEAL

Yoshi's Oakland

510 Embarcadero W., Oakland, 510-238-9200, Yoshis.com

Yoshi's Japanese restaurant in Jack London Square battles the notion that an upscale restaurant can't be kid-friendly. Its current $10 child's plate includes miso soup, veggie tempura, rice, soba noodles, and organic teriyaki chicken, all presented nicely in a bento box — making it the prettiest and healthiest kids meal this side of the bay. It's more costly than a Happy Meal, but it's not your typical grilled cheese, hamburger, or pasta kids meal either. The black-and-white, hand-drawn photo-copied "healthy kids" menu by Chef Shotaro Kamio adds to the charm. Select kids Sunday matinee shows at a heavily discounted price make the renowned jazz club and restaurant even more kid-friendly. Chef Kamio has turned around the kitchen in the last few years, adding a modern twist to traditional Japanese cuisine. So on the rare occasion that you bring your child to a nice restaurant, you can sit back while you nosh on sashimi, seared kobe beef, and fried baby calamari — because you'll know your kid is eating well, too. ●

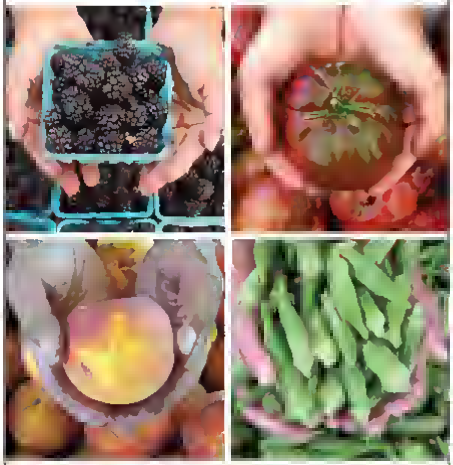
BEST AMERICAN COMFORT FOOD

SR24

3179 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-625-9000, SR24Food.com

It's named after State Route 24 just a block to the west, and like the roadside diners of yesteryear, the house cuisine at this Temescal hangout is all about farm fresh gut pleasing comfort food. Stuff like green goddess salad with a bushel of fresh veggies draped with a creamy yogurt dressing, savory bread pudding laced with wild mushrooms and spices, creamy briny soul pleasing mussel chowder, a tender, crackly skinned organic roasted chicken with farro, zucchini, and corn, smoky braised pork on a bed of grits and greens, tender, slow-cooked pot roast with heirloom carrots and sweet pearl onions. For dessert there's rhubarb pie with strawberry ribboned whipped cream, freshly made doughnuts with bittersweet coffee sauce for dunking, and an exemplary, wonderfully uncomplicated chocolate cake. House-made lemonade, too!

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BEST LOCALLY CONCOCTED BIT OF GRIDIRON SORCERY

The A-11 Offense

Kurt Bryan and Steve Humphries
Piedmont High football, A11offense.com

Just a few years ago, Kurt Bryan and Steve Humphries were frustrated coaches trying to figure out how to win more games with their small school of undersized football players. Their solution — a unique formation called the A-11 offense, which took advantage of a rule loophole — would be revolutionary, featuring two quarterbacks, up to six receivers and all eleven on-field players as potential weapons. Contrast that with the typical football offense, which features one quarterback and just a few pass-catching threats. *Scientific American* magazine did the math and found that the new formation upped the number of possibilities for what can happen on a given play from some 36 to a whopping 10,652. As the Highlanders rode their new toy to exceptional success and other high schools nationwide began to adopt the A-11 (the offense has always been illegal at the collegiate and professional levels), traditionalist objectors cried foul. Last year, the national governing body of high school sports voted overwhelmingly to close the loophole that made Bryan and Humphries' invention possible. But Piedmont's pigskin magicians went back to the lab to make a few adjustments, and a slightly modified version of the A-11 is still going strong.

BEST YOGINI CIRCUS AERIALIST

Laura Camp

Flying Yoga Shala, 4308 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-595-3806, FlyingYogaShala.com

You can't throw a rock around the East Bay without hitting a yoga instructor, but it might be harder to hit one also trained in circus arts. If that combo sounds groovy, check out yogini/circus acrobat Laura Camp and her new studio in Temescal. Flying Yoga Shala. Camp discovered yoga after sustaining a dance injury in the early Nineties; now she mixes hatha yoga with contemporary dance, Russian and Chinese acrobatics, body tension principles found in rock climbing and circus aerials, and the mindfulness of Vipassana meditation. Backing her up are 22 instructors, some of whom she has trained; others who bring their own special skills to the mat (like partner acrobatics or Zumba dance classes, which blend Latin and world music). Trapeze or not, Camp's classes are worth checking out, and pretty soon you, too, will be flowing those poses with the greatest of ease.

BEST SPORTS ASTROLOGER

Andrea Mallis, Virgo in Service

510-874-0811, VirgoInService.com

Some people think the Oakland A's are magic; an East Bay talisman, Berkeley as-


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trologer Andrea Mallis take it even further. She combines her love of the game with her skills as an astrologer, offering her forecasting skills to teams in search of new players. It all started in 2001, when she called in to the A's post-game radio show. "Extra Innings," and gave a right-on reading of pitcher Barry Zito's career, ever since she's been a featured part of the show. She also has appeared on ESPN, MLB.com, and KNBR. Mallis analyzes information from an athlete's chart and compares the position of the person's birth planets with current planetary alignments — a skill she says can supplement the scouting process and save a team money by providing insight into an athlete's performance cycles, susceptibility to injury, and clubhouse chemistry. Forget steroids, and try astrology — at least it's legal.

Readers Say the Dorndest Things

BEST ATHLETE, AMATEUR

Claire Tuttavonna

A former Duke NCAA champion, she teaches young female athletes the importance of eating right to avoid osteoporosis later on in life. — *Lynn Horowitz*

Dennis the Menace of the Bay Area

Derby girls!

Serious intensity and her game face is pure intimidation. — *donnoodle_riot*

Sharon Pavlovic,
NorCal Mountain Bike

This kid. Wow. I'm so inspired by her. She won't go to town like most of the kids in a non-independent race and she kicks ass and has so much humility, focus and grace; she's a superb athlete! — *Lauren @LovesOakland*

BEST ATHLETE, PRO

Barry Zito

He was better in East Bay
— *murphy*

Andrew Wiard.

I have been following this man since he first started out. Glad to see such a positive product of Oakland doing well!
— *ArtKate*

Jamaneca Russell

— *jdsaurus*

BEST BASKETBALL COURTS

Anywhere the Warriors aren't playing

— *skinny*

BEST BIKE RIDE

Fremont

— *pikson*

BEST CALIFORNIA SKI RESORT

Sigmaw

Hey, that's not in the East Bay! — *mebrown*

Readers Say the Dorndest Things

BEST ATHLETE (AMATEUR)
Natalie Coughlin

BEST ATHLETE (PRO)
Stephen Curry

BEST BASKETBALL COURTS
Mosswood Park

BEST BIKE RIDE
Tilden Regional Park

BEST BIKE TOUR
AIDS/Lifecycle, Tuco Trials Bike Tour, Three Bears (tie)

BEST BIKE TRAIL
Bay Trail

BEST CALIFORNIA CASINO
Cache Creek

BEST CALIFORNIA SKI RESORT
Squaw Valley

BEST ENDURANCE CHALLENGE
Oakland Marathon

BEST GYM OR HEALTH CLUB
Downtown Berkeley YMCA

BEST HOMEGROWN SPORTS TEAM
Bay Area Derby Girls

BEST MONTHLY MMA SPORT
Ultimate Prelims

BEST OUTDOOR STORE
REI

BEST PARK
Tilden Regional Park

BEST PILATES STUDIO
Stable Core Pilates

BEST PLACE TO BUY A HACKY SACK
REI and Telegraph Avenue (tie)

BEST PLACE TO MOVE TO OAKLAND A'S
Jack London Square

BEST PLACE TO PLAY BOARD GAMES
The Albatross

BEST POOL HALL
Timbuktu

BEST MARTIAL ARTS STUDIO
Soja Martial Arts

BEST RACE
Oakland Marathon

BEST SCAVENGER HUNT OR SIMILAR EVENT
Go Games and Urban Assault (tie)

BEST SPORTING GOODS STORE
REI

BEST YOGA ACCESSORIES
Lululemon Athletica

BEST YOGA STUDIO
Monkey Yoga Studio

BEST TOUR OF OAKLAND BY FOOT

Oakland Marathon

OaklandMarathon.com

Say you just moved to the Bay Area and know Oakland only as the home of the An Those towering cranes and more than its fair share of crime. Or say you live in San Ramon and don't get many opportunities to explore the city of the land on the other side of the hills. Or maybe you're a longtime Oakland resident who doesn't explore adjacent neighborhoods as often as you'd like. An hour-long spin through the city would rectify the situation, sure, but it wouldn't reveal much of what Oakland's diverse neighborhoods, populations, and landscapes feel like on the ground. You'd have to try a little harder. For that, you'd need the Oakland Marathon. Resuscitated in 2010 after a 25-year absence, the race features a new-and improved course that leads runners on a 26-mile tour of the real Oakland, downtown upscale Rockridge, the hills (views included), blue-collar Dimond, culturally vibrant Fruitvale, ever-on-hong West Oakland, naturally serene Lake Merritt, and a finish at City Hall. The half marathon course cuts a similarly illuminating path through downtown, West Oakland and Jack London Square. There's no better way to experience Oakland and its people in a single outing.

BEST EAST BAY WALK BEFORE WALK

Martinez Regional Shoreline

North end of Ferry St., Martinez, 888-327-2757
EBParks.org

There are many fine afternoon walks you can take along the East Bay shoreline, but too often strollers and joggers have to endure the constant buzz-killing roar of nearby freeway traffic. One spot where you can escape the whiz and roar of cars is the Martinez Regional Shoreline, a stone's throw from the swell town of Martinez in northern Contra Costa County. Well-paved trails weave through twenty acres of tidal marsh that once was the site of a fishing village, granaries, and the longest-operating ferry in the Bay Area. Modern visitors are now surrounded by birdsong instead of traffic, with only the occasional sound of a foresome train whistle for nostalgic effect. You'll also see the remains of an old schooner, *Forrester*. Part of the shoreline is also run by the City of Martinez, with parks for soccer and, yes, bocce ball. And Martinez itself, with its homey attractions is only a short walk away (though be warned: dogs are all used only in specific areas).

TOUGHEST WAY TO SPEND A DAY AT THE LAKE

Lake Merritt Half-Day

PCTrailRuns.com

Taking a lap or two around Lake Merritt on a weekend morning is an East Bay must-do. The bird-watching, the people-watching, the city-reflected-in-the-lake: it's hard to beat, and impossible to replicate. But what happens when the 3.1-mile path around the lake transforms from a meandering pedestrian thoroughfare to a long-distance runner's circuit? Is the water as peaceful, the trail as charming, the shade as nice? There's only one way to find out. Spend a day running laps. That's precisely the goal of the Lake Merritt Half Day, which is a bit of a misnomer because the "half-day race" is a more six hours, while the main event is a twelve-hour continuous race around the lake. In both cases, participants begin at 7 a.m. and run as many laps — or miles, as if were — within the allotted time. The men's records are 76.3 miles for twelve hours and 40.4 for six, women's are 67.9 miles for twelve and 37.3 for the half-day. Think you can beat 'em? Better yet, think you can survive? There's only one way to find out.

BEST PLACE TO GET DRESSED UP AND NOT SPEND A LOT OF MONEY

Golden Gate Fields

1100 Eastshore Hwy., Berkeley, 510-559-7300
GoldenGateFields.com

Typically, the desire to get dressed up for a night on the town usually comes with a heavy price tag. But that's not the case at the local racetrack, because when the horses hit the dirt on Sundays, Golden Gate Fields opens its doors for Dollar Days. Grab the three-piece white suits and flying-saucer-size hats and pretend that you've descended on the Kentucky Derby. There may not be mint juleps and box seats, but if you use your imagination the $1 beers and bleachers can be nice stand-ins. Parking, admission, programs, hot dogs, snacks, and sodas are just a buck, such so you can laze away a whole day playing make-believe without spending more than $5. Place a couple of small bets and with a bit of luck you could even find yourself at the real Kentucky Derby next year.

BEST COURTS ON WHICH TO PLAY IN THE FOOTPRINTS OF LEGENDS

Mosswood Playground

3612 Webster St., Oakland, 510-597 5030,
OaklandNet.com/parks/facilities/rc_mosswood.asp

Mosswood's four basketball hoops don't comprise the East Bay's most or most well-kept courts — there are cracks in the pavement, stickers on the backboards, and the rims don't always have nets. But whatever Mosswood lacks in aesthetics it's topped it more than makes up for in historical value and basketball bona fides. Generations of Bay Area ballers cut their teeth here, including Gary Payton and Jason Kidd, who used the park's gritty pickup games to develop the toughness and skill that would make them NBA All-Stars. Street-ball legend Demetrius "Hook" Mitchell is said to have jumped over an automobile here some twenty years ago to win an outdoor dunk contest. Mosswood's prodigious reputation even earned the North Oakland courts a prominent spot in EA Sports popular 2003 video game, *NBA Street Vol. 2*. While local pro and college players used to come out & up during the off-season, many old-timers say the standard at Mosswood has slipped in recent years. But there's one way to find out for sure: Stop by the park on a weekday afternoon or weekend morning, lace up the high-tops, and try not to get dunked on by the next future NBA star.

BEST HOOPDANCER

Nicole Wong

CherryHoops.com

When she small her first-ever hoopdancing class two years ago, Berkeley resident Nicole Wong had never before seen hoopdancing performed, much less ever attempted it herself. Yet now she's a talented pro. Merging Native-Amer-

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Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST ENDURANCE CHALLENGE

Berkeley City Council Meeting
Go to one, I dare you. — *cafe*

My last relationship
He was a test! — *starwars38*

Alameda County Social Services
— *annlapel3yrs*

Being a mom who works full time
— *stephenneo03*

Del Valle Adventure Race
— *sheon*

Monday Yoga on Sunday morning
— *dinneyme*

Rail Mountaineering Alleycat Race
— *PantsPeople*

Shopping at Berkeley Bowl
— *Hillman, Melissa*

Telegraph Avenue
— *Fleetingbeauty*

Unemployment
— *hannahrobertjohnson*

Completing this survey
— *Wendy Joos*

BEST GYM OR HEALTH CLUB

YMCA Berkeley
Downhill is bad parking. — *mrw18*

Berkeley Kour Mugs
Friendly atmosphere, great location, amazing instructors, amazing gym! — *Kate Gilmorun*

Golds Oakland
It's The Cheers, where everyone knows your name. — *Goldsfitness*

Ironhorse Bicycles Saleem aka KOB FITNESS
Newest Steam runs the best new gym in Oakland. — *mwy66*

Tomahawk Climbing
Members can use any of the gyms. Five locations, Oakland, Concord, and Berkeley. —*Oaktownie*

24 hours
Still the cheapest and with most equipments. — *Prince*

Sutter Health
Telegraph Ave, near 51-24 everyone. From teachers who belong to Sutter Health and have a doctor's prescription. VERY inexpensive to East Bay elders with needs to keep in shape. — *frozen*

24 Hours, Moraga
The gym is brand new — *mattm*

ocsn is a communal dance with the late-Sixties Hula Hoop, "hooping" is a trendy new aerobic adventure; hoopers spin the wide polyethylene rings around hips, waists, necks, limbs, shoulders, heads, wrists and ankles. They're doing it from Burning Man to Cirque de Soleil to your local gym. Wong, while working toward a Ph.D. in education at UC Berkeley, founded her company Cherry Hoops to teach others what she calls a remarkably accessible and easy sport, which she insists improves muscle tone but doesn't even feel like a workout. She also performs at private parties and corporate events such as a Lady Gaga–themed shindig in Oakland earlier this year for Yelp members. Wong hooped in a black leotard, red bootie, superhero sunglasses, and platinum wig.

BEST DOG PARK

Susan Koenig

East Bay Agility, Cesar Chavez Park, Berkeley. EastBayAgility.com

Tough love is way overrated, but the truth is, sometimes a kick in the ass is the best medicine for what ails you. For a jump in the fitness direction, check out personal trainer Susan Koenig of East Bay Agility. She's a drill sergeant, but in the nicest way. Clients of all levels find themselves doing stuff they didn't think they could do, like running stairs or pumping out push-ups. Her GO group training meets at Cesar Chavez Park in Berkeley for six-week sessions; she offers personal training and helps "learn to love running for non-runners" class, and she also teaches at the Berkeley YMCA. Koenig knows that physical fitness isn't just about bodies — it's about the mind, too, and if her clients' expectations of themselves have dipped because of past "failures," Koenig won't hesitate to point that out and offer fresh encouragement. "The real improvement," one of Koenig's students says, "is that she helps me try harder."

BEST TENNIS PRO

Carlton Jones

Aztec Tennis, 510-290-8027 AztecTennis.com

His banner flies on tennis courts around Fifteen, but when it comes to landing on the right side of the court Carlton Jones is a teacher worth finding. The tall, lean instructor lives the part of a tennis pro, and handles classes ranging from solos to ensembles. He teaches technique as well as etiquette. (You pick up your own loose balls here, mister.) After a few lessons, you'll be able to break any bad habits you taught yourself and perk up a few new skills that will serve you well no matter where you are serving. One of the wonderful things that Carlton does is use his paying students to subsidize his work teaching tennis to young people who don't have the means to pay for a private tutorial. It's no surprise to run into an alum of the Jones method when looking for a pick-up game on the weekend. Carlton encourages his students to make play dates with one another, matching players of equal abilities to further each other's game. The best part of that is seeing how far you've come — or looking across the net to see how good you could be.

BEST PLACE TO GET YOUR WARRIOR ON

San Leandro Optimist Rifle and Pistol Range

3001 Davis St. San Leandro. 510-636-9605 SLRifle.com

Many of us here in the East Bay believe that guns are bad, just on principle. But damn, it's fun to fire one off every once in a while. Next time the urge hits, check out San Leandro Optimist Rifle and Pistol Range, an indoor/outdoor facility open to the public as well as to law enforcement. It's been around since 1948, and the San Leandro Optimist Club runs it. For just $135 clients can use one of fourteen handgun lanes, twelve rifle, fifty-yard lanes, or six outdoor 100-yard lanes for as long as they want. The only drawback for the all-yet uninitiated is that, although the optimists at SLORPR will sell you ammo and rent you safety glasses, you have to provide the firearm. And for the kids, the Range offers a marksmanship program in which youth ages ten to twenty can learn to handle and shoot .22-caliber rifles.

BEST YOGA FOR PERIMENOPAUSAL WOMEN

Jnana Gowan's Riding the Change

PowerHed.com

The last few years before menopause begins



BEST CLOTHING ITEM SPOTTED ON JAMARCUS RUSSELL

Replica Jamarcus Russell Oakland Raiders Jersey

Dead serious. Him and his posse walked into my place of work, and he was wearing a zephyr jersey. Lettering was totally wrong. Brilliant. I think he just sucked trying to leave the shop. — *skarsky*

BEST COMMUTE METHOD

Bike
— *mermaidmom*

BEST LOCAL CAR SHOW

Royal Johnny Fest Friday Cruise In

Done in conjunction with the Art Murmur, turning into a great Friday evening of traditional rods, bombs, and customs. A good DJ spanning period rock, boy, and music. — *Nomedi*

BEST SPORTS BAR

Henry's
— *bmatregs*

BEST SPOT TO WATCH FIREWORKS!

Dublin & San Ramon Jills

Every year it's a tradition, bundle up... it's 54 degrees by 9 pm!!! — *gregcross*

MOST DESTRUCTIVE USE OF OUR PARKS

Mountain biking!
— Mike Vandeman

WORST TREND BY EAST BAY PARENTS

SUV-sized mega strollers that take up the entire sidewalk and shouldn't be allowed in stores or restaurants
Come on people — *klo*

can be rough for women who experience any or all of the classic perimenopause symptoms, from backache, insomnia, and acne to mood swings and memory lapses. With her bimonthly "Riding the Change" workshops at 7th Heaven Yoga, Jhana Gowan teaches postures and strategies for easing that turmoil a. One helpful pose, for example, is Viparita Karani, or "Legs up the Wall," which entails lying on the floor facing a wall with the legs resting vertically on that wall — because upside-down poses are said to have soothing and invigorating effects on the neuroendocrine system, which is more or less in crisis at that time in a woman's life. Class participants are also encouraged to share and discuss their own symptoms and experiences, which can offer welcome encouragement in a youth-worshipping society that talks endlessly about puberty, but avoids addressing "the change." Gowan was inspired to create the classes after listening to mind/body-medicine pioneer Joan Borysenko's CD *Menopause an Initiation into Power*

BEST PLACE TO PICK SOMEONE UP

Berkeley Ironworks and Fitness Club

800 Potter St., Berkeley, 510-981 9900.
TouchstoneClimbing.com/bi.html

For singles with a sense of adventure, look no further than Berkeley Ironworks, a Touchstone Gym for your next hookup. Cougar bait, college coeds, professionals, daredevils, and other adrenaline junkies come here to get their fitness on. Climbing is usually a two-person sport, and don't worry, you don't have a bebsy partner — just ask at the front desk, and yeah, Ironworks will find an instant partner for you. But don't think you have to come here alone either. There are plenty of opportunities for lead climbers and top ropers to exchange encouragement and high fives with the roped up athletes around them. One way to meet up with like-minded climbing fanatics is to head to the bouldering cave where the young, shirtless hotties and lean, flexible twentysomething girlies hang out for slopers and crimpers. You can make your introduction as a spotter who keeps Miss Cutie a head off the mat if she misses that V5 move. Prefer something more mellow? Give some beta to the seared-stupid ball dangling from the top rope and earn pointers with his single mom or dad. Climbers are fit for so to stay in shape they must do more than jump on the sharp end. That means Ironworks is a well-appointed fitness club complete with cardio equipment, free weights, and weight machines plus group classes for core strengthening, indoor cycling, yoga, cardio boxing, kickboxing, and more, including Pilates and capoeira. And you don't have to be a climber to do any of that... now do you?

BEST UPHILL BIKE RACE

Mount Diablo Challenge

SaveMountDiablo.org

To squeeze the toughest aerobic workout into the least amount of time, one need consider only one word: climb. Gravity and your aching muscles will take care of the rest. From the base of Mount Diablo at the Athenian School in Danville — the parking lot at the summit is 3,249 feet "elevated over the miles of winding asphalt. That's an unrelenting, 5 percent grade — but usually hot enough to make you think. Since 1981, bicyclists from throughout the Bay Area and beyond have accepted the Mount Diablo Challenge; this October, in the race's 29th year, more than 1,000 riders are expected. Finish times range from the mid-forty-minute range to more than two hours, and riders come from a diverse range of backgrounds, including team racing, hard racing, and just about everything in between — including, these days, fixies and unicycles. It's all for a good cause (bex and burning lungs and calves) as the nonprofit that organizes the event, Save Mount Diablo, also benefits from proceeds. The only thing better than the view at the top is the ride back down and our old friend gravity helps out there, too.

BEST BIKE TOUR

Oaklandish Tour de Taco

Oaklandish.com

Sometimes when you hop on a bike, you just want to ride — around the block, through the neighborhood, until you get tired and find yourself lost and in search of a Slurpee. At others, you need a goal — a destination or a mission. And what's a more worthy mission than obtaining tacos? According to organizers of the Oaklandish Tour de Taco, we're much jilled as a "gastronomical quest on wheels through the Fruitvale district of Oakland," the annual ride hosted by the East Bay Bicycle Coalition and Cyrus Farivar of CaliforniaTacoTrucks.com leads participants along a bike-friendly course from one taco truck to the next. This year's ride held in February, stopped at four taco trucks along a 2.5-mile loop and then visited an ice cream parlor a couple blocks down the street for dessert. Those looking to tack another 3.5 miles onto the ride then convened at a bar in Old Oakland for refreshments. The date for next year's ride has yet to be set, but organizers welcome taco truck veterans and newbie food noobs" alike as well as riders of all skill levels. The ride's free, but don't forget a helmet, $15 or so for food, and an empty stomach.

BEST CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE CENTURY

The Best of the Bay Century

CherryCityCyclists.org

It may not be the East Bay's most beloved bicycling event (that honor will attended...or the most precipitous, but you gotta love Double Dipper). Take some of the best cycling roads in the East Bay and string them together in a variety of configurations that offer progressively greater levels of difficulty. First is Short BOB: an 83-mile course with 6,000 feet of climbing. Add the infamous Sierra Road loop east of Milpitas and you have Tall BOB: a 99-mile ride with 8,000 feet of climbing. Closest to a true century is Long BOB: it pays a 23-mile loop onto the beginning of Short BOB. Finally, for the real dikhards, there's Super BOB: 125 miles and 10,300 feet of climbing — or as organizers the Cherry City Cyclists of San Leandro put it, a course that's "extremely challenging." All courses start near the Orinda BART station and include roads ridden in the 2006 Tour of California: Bear Creek, Happy Valley, Wildcat Canyon, Grizzly Peak, Skyline, Redwood, Niles Canyon, and more. Support is generous and rest stops nicely gapped. This year's event featured barely 100 riders, yet everything else is in place for an unforgettable ride.



Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST HOMEGROWN SPORTS LEAGUE

Montclair Football League

This is a small, fraternal league that has been in place for 20 years, and has helped hundreds of school-age kids learn about teamwork, communication, good eating, planning, planning, and self-esteem building. Enough team-oriented sports. — *Parkmontclair*

BEST NONTRADITIONAL SPORT

Full Contact Kissing

It's more fun than it sounds! — *Most well liked*

Volleyball

Led by Xceleration VBC — our Last Bay Girls dominate! — *volleyboy1*

Open Water Swimming in the Bay

What better way to enjoy the Bay Area? — *DubLM*

Doin the nasty/drinking

— *interracialcouple*

Lounging and snacking

— *chunkyboudoir*

Yelling on Telegraph Avenue

— *hoosmokin*

BEST OUTDOOR STORE

Transparita

Okay, so this is just for running and swimming, but they're awesome. — *dedilay66*

Wilderness Exchange

On San Pablo in Berkeley — *Russell M*

Marmot

They rent lots of gear — *mbrown70*

Forrest market Lake Merritt

— *hamletwebersfriend*

BEST PARK

Moraga

Great place for kids and adults and dogs and it is safe. — *Trish M*

Tilden Park in Berkeley

Miles of trails for running, hiking, mtn biking, the Little Farm, the Steam Trains and much more. — our family goes there multiple times a week! — *BlueBirdMom*

University of California Botanical Garden...

The garden has it all: great views of the bay, a stellar plant collection, benches and picnic tables, great informational displays about the extraordinary plants in the collection. It cannot be beat. — *mirrormelody*

BEST ENDURANCE CHALLENGE

Dick Collins Firetrails 50

FireTrails50.net

The East Bay offers more recreational racing opportunities than you can shake a Clif Bar at, covering seemingly every discipline from swimming to biking to hopping on one leg (if it doesn't, it ought to) and every distance from a single mile to 200 (a double-century, in bicycling terms). Riding 200 miles is no cakewalk, but neither is running 31 — especially along the undulating spine of the East Bay hills. To those for whom a marathon just isn't enough, 31 miles (or fifty kilometers) is 4.8 miles longer than a standard marathon, and happens to be the length of two footraces that take place every year in the East Bay hills between Hayward and Oakland (Skyline 50K) and Fremont and Livermore (Ohlone 50K). However, when 31 miles isn't enough, there's a third East Bay ultra marathon that takes the prize. The Dick Collins Firetrails 50 covers fifty miles, primarily along the East Bay Skyline National Trail from Lake Chabot to Tilden Park and back. It encompasses 7,600 feet of elevation gain and only three miles of pavement. If that's still not enough for you, well, good luck.

BEST SOCCER CAMP

My Yute Soccer Camp

MyYuteSoccer.org

Because soccer has meant so much to kenanne his days spent playing it as a small boy on a street named Unity Lane in Kingston, Jamaica, Raoul Sparkes founded the My Yute Soccer Camp in Oakland three years ago for boys and girls ages six to twelve. At no cost to the players or their parents, the camp entails a week of practice and games on the Oakland Technical High School campus. It's a labor of love for Sparkes, who has traveled the world playing soccer, competed semiprofessionally, and believes that soccer doesn't just fortify bodies: Its lessons go further and deeper than that: teaching players communication skills and humility and the compassionate that he showed on Unity Lane. The program's high-profile coaches are members of Africana, the East Bay based soccer league in which Sparkes has played for ten years. Fresh fruit and whole-grain snacks augment the lessons furthering Sparkes' vision of bodies and souls engaged in the "beautiful game."

BEST BRAZILIAN DANCE TEACHER

Isaura Oliveira

IsauraBrasil.com

A mystical figure in breezy white skirts and sometimes be sighted in the vicinity of Lake Merritt. This vision is local dance priestess Isaura Oliveira. On Mondays and Fridays at Gold's Gym in Oakland, and on Wednesdays

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Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST PILATES STUDIO

The Pilates Studio

Amy Brueckmeier is a fabulous pilates instructor — she helped me rehab my knee post ACL reconstruction and is now keeping me in shape through pregnancy. — *BluebirdMama*

Stable Core Pilates

Small classes, fabulous instructors, immaculate facility, reasonably priced. — *KOOPER*

BEST PLACE TO BUY A HACKY SACK

?

You guys are really reaching. — *SF boyfriece*

BEST PLACE TO PLAY BOARD GAMES

Hob Nob in Alameda

And good food too! — *pamela magnuson pezzillo*

Albatross

Can't even think of anywhere else. — *dolatek*

Colonial Donuts on Lakeshore

Great chess games going on there. — *susan sherrell*

At home with a beer and friends

— *jenykah*

Trivia!

— *samsephyre*

BEST MARTIAL ARTS STUDIO

Suigetsukan

100 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-562-3861

If a distaste for machismo and testosterone has turned you off to martial arts, the lofty politics and queer-friendly attitude of Suigetsukan might be more your style. Dedicated to making martial arts more accessible to all members of the community, this dojo is a collectively run nonprofit offering all sliding-scale courses with no one turned away for lack of funds. In addition to their courses in Japanese martial arts including Danzan Ryu Jujitsu, Aikido, and Bai todo (Japanese sword) Suigetsukan also offers courses in lesser-known disciplines such as Wing Chun Ba Gua, and Eskrima and a weekly Zen meditation group. They boast an especially high retention rate among female students, and offer courses from the long running Girl Army Collective, which teaches self-defense skills to women. Kids age six and up are welcome to enroll in the youth courses, taught by Oakland native Sensei Gina Rossi.

BEST DANCE STUDIO FOR ASPIRING TWINKEETOES

Shawl-Anderson Dance Center

2704 Alcatraz Ave., Berkeley, 510-654-5921
Shawl-Anderson.org

When Frank Shawl and Victor Anderson left the New York dance scene in 1958 they dreamed of creating a welcoming school for students of all ages and abilities. Fifty-two years later, Shawl-Anderson Dance Center is still the homegrown heart of East Bay dance. Everyone has a place at Shawl-Anderson: from toddlers moving for the joy of it to teens mastering hip-hop, to septuagenarians taking their first *tendus* in beginning ballet. The Shawl-Anderson reputation stretches from coast to coast, and dancers from companies like Mark Morris, Alvin Ailey, and Suzanne Farrell lead master classes, while quarterly workshops and nearly 100 regular classes mean there's dancing every day of the week. Victor and Frank's stories of performing with *The Perry Como Show* or *as* Ilross Bway are yours for the asking, and friendly smiles are forthcoming. Their warmth sets the tone — even if you walk in with two left feet, you'll waltz out with a spring in your step.

BEST BABY MASSAGE

Tum E Time

510-798-3089, TumETime.com

After spending twenty plus years working at schools and hospitals with occupational, physical, speech and language therapists and working as a program coordinator for an early-intervention center serving special-needs babies, Oakland resident Kim Lyons became a mother. Working and playing with her own baby inspired her to study time-tested techniques for infant massage — a delicate process, given that the body being massaged is tiny and fragile but rewarding physically and mentally for both grown up and child. Lyons has also received training in doula support, CranioSacral Therapy, and acupressure, and has earned certificates in teaching infant massage and yoga for special needs children. Experience has taught her that infant massage, like digestion boosts the immune system, assists circulation and respiration, reduces stress, and offers relaxation and deeper sleep. Believing that babies enjoy massage and benefit from it as much as people of any other age do, Lyons created Tum E Time, a program she offers in Oakland and Berkeley, to teach parents and other caregivers techniques for Infant yoga, infant massage, and other forms of creative play meant to strengthen bonds, promote relaxation, and alleviate gas.

BEST TAILGATE ADVENTURE

Raiders Opener

Oakland-Alameda Coliseum parking lot, Oakland

It looks like something out of *Lord of the*

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST RACE
La Kermesse
Just kidding, had to. — humorr

Music
Duh! — *Bobby*

OMG
That's racist. — ghoulr

Asian
— globrat

Conversation
— Maxwell Flash

Museum
— Charlie Pilgrim

Karaoke
LOL. — *dustday*

Latin
— Silasia

RACEWALK
— taylorstorm

Public Intoxicator
— tech

Home to a crucial sweetheart.
Just kidding, Oakland Marathon. — shirsahn

BEST SCAVENGER HUNT OR SIMILAR EVENT
Looking for cookies...
— sweetpeajen

Real Homebrew
— Nate Sabowitch

Rings. Endless fields of smoldering blackton filled with the smoke of burning flesh. Skulls and spikes, war drums and howls fill the crowd along with plenty of cheap beer. This is the annual Raiders opener tailgating scene, one the most exhilarating, potentially dangerous tailgating adventures a football fan can get into especially if you're wearing a San Diego Chargers jersey. The Raiders are known throughout the world for their criminal barbarian fans, who wear their loser outcast status like a badge of honor. Every year they show up by the tens of thousands with hope in their black Raider hearts. Every year that hope is usually crushed by the second half as fans turn on each other, the players and the maligned owner Al Davis, the Coliseum at the stadium. But for that brief period before the first snap out there on that sunbaked blacktop, it's easy to see the draw of the Raider Nation.

BEST HOMEGROWN HOBBY
Fantasy Football

If you've ever experienced the rush of victory or sacrificed large chunks of your fall and winter to fantasy football, you have Oakland to thank. As the story goes, the game was invented by Raiders limited partner Bill Winkenbach. *Oakland Tribune* beat writer Scotty Stirling, and Raiders PR flack Bill Tunnell in a New York hotel room during a team trip to the East Coast in 1962. The three soon founded the Greater Oakland Pigskin Prognosticators League, originally open only to a small group of people associated with the Raiders and the Trib. But the idea quickly spread, and since then, fantasy football has become a national obsession. A recent ESPN study showed that some 27 million people play it, each averaging about nine hours a week during the season. If only the team that spawned it could be as successful.

BEST SIDESHOW AT A WARRIORS GAME
Oracle Arena

7000 Coliseum Way, Oakland, 888-479-4667
GoldenStateWarriors.com

Getting a groove on when you are ten games out of contention might be a challenge for some, but there's something in the air at a Golden State Warrior basketball game and it isn't just the weed wafting through the upper deck. The DJ booth is in full effect at Warrior home games and it truly makes for a great time out. Rather than the same old "Start Me-Up" riff the team is committed to young spinnica and musicians blasting the beats during breaks in the action. While we love the throwback style in most aspects of our pro sports, we don't miss the organ music or tired anthems piped through the speakers. We'll go new school for the lively sounds of fresh funk being created on the fly by live performers. The artists have to be ready for a quick change in momentum, a flurry of late lead changes, or to inspire our boys in the blue and gold to try rallying one more time. Even if the Warriors come up short and fans leave with coverage in their hearts, they'll have music in their souls.

BEST PRO ATHLETE
Stephen Curry

Golden State Warriors

No tattoos or temper tantrums. No ball-hogging or on-the-bench sulking. And no suspicious moped accidents. Guard Stephen Curry's rookie season was marked by steadily improving and oftentimes spectacular play not the dubious distinctions that have besmirched many Golden State Warriors of recent memory. When the Dubs used the seventh overall pick in last June's NBA draft to select the skinny, baby-faced, six-foot-three superstar from tiny Davidson College, many questioned whether Curry could survive the jump to the pros. But after a pedestrian start his ascending performance gradually silenced all doubters, when, specially by the season's final month when he averaged better than 26 points, eight assists and six rebounds per game and made a late challenge for Rookie of the Year. Curry's saccharine shooting stroke, omniscient court vision and unselfish play restored a glimmer of hope to the Easy Bay's body of soulless-yet long-tortured pro basketball fans. That feat alone is miraculous enough to deserve this award.

BEST AMATEUR ATHLETE (COLLEGE)
Shane Vereen

Cal football

Primarily known for two years as mega-



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stud tailback Jahvid Best's backup, Vereen came into his own last year and won a special place in Old Blues' hearts with an epic performance against archrival Stanford. When Best (a first round NFL draft pick now with the Detroit Lions) went down with a season-ending injury midway through the 2009 season, many Cal fans were despondent. But the 5-foot-10, 200-pound Vereen stepped up in a major way, running for 159 yards in his first game as starter. He followed that up with a school-record 42 carries for 193 yards against Stanford in the annual Big Game in Palo Alto, rushed for 122 yards in the Poinsettia Bowl and finished the season with 14 touchdowns, and an average of better than five yards per carry. When the 2010 season gets underway this fall in Strawberry Canyon, Vereen will try to lead Cal back into the national rankings. But this time, he won't be taking anyone by surprise

BEST AMATEUR ATHLETE, HIGH SCHOOL

Jabari Brown

Oakland High basketball

Last January, when Jabari Brown abruptly left a famous Las Vegas-area talent factory and transferred to his hometown Oakland High, critics and skeptics raked him over the coals. Brown's a prima donna, they said, and overrated. But Brown put his head down and went to work, leading the Wild Cats to an Oakland Athletic League regular-season title and the Northern California quarterfinals. A stellar showing on the summer travel team circuit has boosted Brown's stock even higher — he's now rated among the top fifteen basketball prospects in America for the graduating class of 2011. A strong shooting guard with a diverse arsenal of offensive weapons, the six-foot-four Brown will have his choice of colleges when he makes a decision sometime in the next year; local schools Cal and Stanford are competing with a host of East Coast and national powerhouses for his services. But first, a bit of unfinished business. Brown embarks on his senior season this November when he'll try to take a talented Oakland squad to the state championships and become the East Bay's first McDonald's All-American since Leon Powe in 2003

BEST PLACE TO WATCH HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

Salesian High School

2851 Salesian Ave., Richmond. 510-234-4428. Salesian.com

It's not the biggest gym in the East Bay but it might be the most intense. The Salesian High Chieftans play some of the best basketball in a world of Cougars, Pumas and Panthers. Not only that, but the nickname itself has a nickname — and "the Jackets" is a cool moniker to wear. Berkeley High's sideline spirit creature is one of the very few insects bold enough to stand up to a world of Spartans, Titans, and yes, Bears. But the Berkeley Hornet mascot is a true representative of a school that is easy to overlook, but only at your own peril



Best baby massage: Turn E.T. min

Melissa Barnes

BEST MASCOT

The Berkeley High School Yellowjackets

Berkeley High School, 2223 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley. 510-644-6121. BHS.BerkeleyNet

It can't be easy standing out at Berkeley High School. Overshadowed by the University of California a few blocks away, the largest high school community in the East Bay does not have the kind of home field advantage possessed by other towns with non-big high school. Try wearing the school colors of red and gold around town and you might find yourself taunted by people who think you're representing USC or Stanford. But the Yellowjacket mascot certainly stands

BEST NEW PREP SPORT

Lacrosse

Stripped down for the new millennium, high schools need to make the most out of this least. With equipment costs overwhelming traditional sports, a sport that dates back longer than almost any other in the United States is poised for growth in the Bay Area. It's lacrosse, and it's coming your way. In the past, kids didn't take part unless they did some time back East, but this newest league sport in the prep scene is starting to take off here. Much of its popularity stems from its appeal to sporting types leery of football's high concussion and physical toll. Once you've got a stick and some padding, you are good to go on the pitch. Fast like soccer, but with more goals than a week's worth of *futbol* games, the LAX scene rewards agility over bulk — another 21st century kind of benefit. High schools are having hard-to-find times suiting up sufficient squads to many of the old guard sports. So maybe the Inanen greenery sport of lacrosse can bring back that old school spirit

BEST PLACE TO GET STARTED SKATEBOARDING

Soda Hall

Hearst and LeRoy, Berkeley. EECS.Berkeley.edu

It's not entirely legal, but that's part of the appeal, isn't it? If you wanted to take part in a sport with clean lines and structure, you would be playing shuffleboard. But the right mind-set is only part of the game if you want to start skating, but are not yet ready to take it to the skate park. After all, you won't get up to speed if you're afraid to get rolling. So you need a place without a lot of lucky-loos. The Cal campus fits the bill. If you're willing to get up early an stay ant late. Of course, we can't recommend doing anything that is against the law, but there is something pretty effervescent in getting faux wheels on the hilly ground near Soda Hall. Better bring your textbooks, too — if an officer of the law catches you, maybe he'll buy your excuse that you were on the way to the library and the skateboard just fell out.

BEST MODEL RAILROAD OF THE EAST BAY

Golden State Model Railroad Museum

900-A Derman Dr., Richmond. 510-234-4884. GSMRM.org

There are several model railroading clubs and organizations in the East Bay, but the Golden State Model Railroad Museum is the one whose layout provides the best look at the East Bay's own railroading history. The sponsoring East Bay Model Engineers Society dates back to the 1930s, and moved into its

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST PLACE TO MOVE THE OAKLAND A'S

Downtown Oakland
Bring the City Back to Life! — YoKarree

Hamilton
But any other time none would do — Jasmom

Hayward
Call them the East Bay A's (or East BAys for short). — Joel Lively

West Oakland
Push Fremont. — Oakcurmur

San Francisco
I love the idea of the A's & Giants sharing the stadium. — BB

Jack London Square
In this not the most obvious public planning issue in the Bay Area? What would SOMA/Mission Bay be right now without Corporate Telephone Pads? Bay game in SF > Ferry to Oakland for night game. Questions? — jbarkeley

Jack London Square
The only way to make that place stop sucking. — higginsmojo

Across the parking lot
— IDC

Anywhere where we don't have to pay for a new stadium.
— lassojay

Bangladesh
— mr.adorkable

Downtown, 15 years ago
— alexwrap

El Cerrito High School
— yourmom

El Paso
— idawg

Far away
— Blythe

Fremont
— glasgowsux

Gulf Coast, LA
— Realist

Into the Bay
— oldgrrl

Oakland Army Base
— little broad

Oakland County, mideastern
— terry furry

Sun Realll!
— mwarial

Sorry to be former location of the Kaiser Arena.
— stork

Don't
— lovemurry

current location (at the Miller/Knox Regional Shoreline) in 1985. It runs N. O. mod HO scale layouts, covering more than 10,000 square feet. Like many California model railroads, the Tilden Park loop is represented, but it's the HO layout's depiction of East Bay features including the Oakland Mole, 16th Street Passenger Terminal and trolley systems and the rail connections from the mines, ore to valley towns and the Sierras that are particularly interesting. Running trains can be viewed by the public noon to 5 p.m. on Sundays from April through December. The museum also has open hours on Wednesdays and Saturdays, though stock may not be rolling. Special holiday shows are open throughout December. And while you're there, don't miss TV personality Tom Snyder's tin-plate layout in the basement!

BEST HOLE TO START YOUR GOLF GAME

First Hole at Tilden Park Golf Course

10 Golf Course Dr., Berkeley, 510-848-7373, AmericanGolf.com

The best way to get that grand-slam feeling when you're carrying a double-digit handicap is to tee up at Tilden Park golf course. The first hole is a 420-yard uphill blast, but if you don't mind an undulance, a great first shot will have you floating on air for the rest of your round. The par-70 course features plenty of challenges but getting the biggest one out of the way first makes the Berkeley public course unique. While waiting for your tee time, you can watch dozens of others get ready to launch, and picture yourself placing the first shot of the game right into the middle of the fairway. It's kind of a grip-it-and-rip-it hole with a target that is too far to reach in one, but wide enough to forgive all but the wickedest slice or hook. Sure, having a crowd gathered around may give you the yips, but turn that nervous energy into the 15th at Augusta and you'll have the rest of your round to remember when you had your own gallery, and the biggest shot of your round already on your scorecard.

BEST BOWLING GIMMICK

Red Pin Bowling at Albany Bowl

540 San Pablo Ave., Albany, 510-526-8810, AlbanyBowl.biz

Seeing red after missing that 7-10 split? It may be you chance to win a free game. Albany Bowl has gone to red pin bowling mid-week, with a perk sure to attract the attention of any avid roller. Mixed into the multitude of white pins are a handful of red-colored pins. If your head pin turns up blushing red, alert the staff, and they'll announce, overhead that red pin bowling is in play. If you can handle the pressure and knock down all ten pins, you'll have won yourself a free game and the admiration of your fellow bowlers. Of course, the red pin doesn't show up that often and may not be the head pin when it does, and it may not make things easier knowing that the spotlight is shining on you. But what's the worst that can happen? Let's say you leave a pin standing and that parade moves on. People may look, shake their heads, and walk away. And then you will be a little red yourself.

Readers Say the Darndest Things

BEST SPORTING GOODS STORE

Play It Again Sports
Good deals on barely used stuff. — mattso

Wilderness Exchange
— Janice's Head

BEST YOGA STUDIO

Square One Yoga
Ashley West Roberts is an outstanding instructor! My entire day is better after one of Ashley's classes. — Oaklandbone

Funky Dater
But take away that rug, please! — Fourlife

Yoga Mandala
Funky music, sweet yoga postures. Good crowd. You're sure to sweat by bi-spiritual people. The instructors work you and have fun at the same time. The best yoga in the East Bay. — Lael P

Namaste In Rockridge
Hands down (word fag), the best, most experience, most intuitive and skilled teachers in the Bay Area. — zoodoc

Square One Yoga Collective
Katy is the most gracious yoga studio owner. All of the teachers are fabulous. It's always a wonderful experience. — kfarbo

Studio and Yoga
This place is only one that I know of that offers yoga for parents with disabilities. This is a rarity and especially helpful. — oaklandmel

Mojahay Yoga Studio
Tim Thompson balances an intense passion for taking you deeply into yoga with a wonderfully goofy sense of humor. — Mandy

BEST PLACE TO PLAY FRISBEE WITH YOUR POOCH

Point Isabel

2701 Isabel St., Richmond, 888-327-2757, EBParks.org

Those magnificent dogs with their flying discs can be found throughout the East Bay but the best place to watch Airedales catch air is Point Isabel. The puppies can run off leash and hound about to their hearts' content without worrying about getting tangled up with a stroller or stuck both up a pack of hyperactives. Owners take the occasional tumble as per for the course, and they don't get hurt if you cut crosses paths with them. And of course the skill level is as high as the owners can launch it. Sometimes, impromptu challenges result in the charm of canyon top-thuds — inspiring dogs and their owners to greater heights and greater leaps. At Point Isabel, off leash is the standard for dogs. Being on target is your job. ●

BUY FRESH BUY LOCAL

Local Food View:
Sprout!

Growing your own sprouts is as easy as 1,2,3! All you need is a glass jar (a well washed pasta sauce or peanut butter jar works well) with some kind of mesh, like cheesecloth, attached to the mouth with string or a rubber band.

Step 1: Fill the jar with about ¼ cup "sprouting seeds" and cover with water.
Step 2: Let the seeds soak overnight and then drain thoroughly.
Step 3: Rinse the seeds once a day, filling the jar with water and draining completely.



In between 4 and 6 days you will have fresh sprouts ready to eat! There are many varieties to try, including alfalfa, lentil, mung bean and sunflower. And not only are sprouts easy they're also delicious and extremely healthy!

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CARDED FOR KOMBUCHA?

Revelations about the alcohol content in kombucha lead to a spate of grocery store recalls.

By Rachael Swan

Rob Parriott first heard rumors of a potential **kombucha** recall in early June. Up until then, the fizzy fermented tea had been flying off the shelves at Whole Foods Berkeley, where Parriott serves as a dairy specialist. "Flying" would almost be an understatement. On average, the store sold at least thirty cases a week, each with twelve bottles of kombucha. The bottles went for $2.99 to $3.79 a pop, which meant the drink was generating well over $1,000 a week in revenue. And that didn't account for the copious amount of kombucha that Whole Foods kept on tap. Parriott heard about the kombucha flap on a Monday, when three vendors stopped in to warn that the drink was under investigation for its trace alcohol content — which in some cases exceeded the 0.5 percent permitted for "non-alcoholic" beverages. Tuesday was Parriott's day off, but he got a call from **Whole Foods** at around 5 p.m. Steffers were pulling all the kombucha off the shelves. Parriott was not surprised. "I told you so," he said.

Once touted by health-food addicts as an elixir, kombucha now has a stain on its reputation. Apparently, some bottles clocked in at 2 or 3 percent alcohol in recent laboratory tests. It's only a slight difference, said Los Angeles brewer **G.T. Dave** whose company, **Millennium**, makes the ever-popular Synergy organic & raw kombucha drink. But it's enough to stir up concern. After receiving inquiries from several states — and one large distributor — the **Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB)** posted a guidance document on its website. Headline: "Kombucha Products Containing At Least .5 Percent Alcohol By Volume Are Alcohol Beverages."



Temporarily unavailable in area retailers

Which means that if manufacturers don't lower their alcohol content, health food addicts could get carded when buying kombucha.

It's not an official TTB recall, wrote agency spokesperson **Art Resnick**. But it has led to a spate of voluntary product suspensions. Midmonth, halted production a couple weeks ago, and Dave said he doesn't know when to resume. "We wanted to err on the side of caution," he explained. **Berkeley Bowl** dairy specialist **Sunny Duong** said his staff pulled **Celestial, Longva** and **Vibranez** kombucha drinks off the shelves after receiving letters from those companies. Sales haven't dropped precipitously at Berkeley Bowl, Duong said, since people can still purchase the local brands — including **Lev's Original Kombucha** on tap. But other stores took more extreme measures. **The Pasta Shop** in Rockridge just removed all of its kombucha by phone. Whole Foods did likewise, expunging all kombucha products from all of its stores. The Berkeley location was especially hard hit, according to Parriott. "We got credit for what we could from the manufacturer and then poured out the rest," he said. He added that Whole Foods main suppliers don't stock the drink any more, so any store that has it is just buying stuff the distributors had on hand.

As a result, the Berkeley store is losing thousands of dollars of sales each week. Parriott said he fields customer calls on a daily basis. Signs at the Whole Foods bakery offer a preemptive apology: "Sorry, no kombucha on tap until further notice."

It's a headlong plunge for a drink that had already generated its own cult of celebration and was right on the verge of becoming a craze. In a recent *East Bay Express* article, supporters championed kombucha for its "probiotic, polyphenolic amino acids enzymes, vitamins, minerals, yeasts, detoxifiers, membrane-strengtheners, free radical scavengers, immunity-boosters, anti-inflammatories, antibacterials, antibiotics and anti-parasitics." Dave credits the drink for curing his mother's breast cancer. Though scholarship on the product is disputable (and mostly anecdotal), many consumers are sure of its salutary properties. Not to mention it comes in a panoply of exotic flavors. At its height, Whole Foods Berkeley sold guava, ginger, ginger berry, raspberry strawberry, mango hibiscus, pineapple, multi-grain, and elder flower. All looked fun once and had a nice, pungent, carbonated fruity zing.

Maybe it was the flavor that attracted so many people. Or the beery aftertaste.

Whatever the case, kombucha went from being a drink to being its own subculture. "I didn't know if 'trend' is the right word," said Dave, who learned to brew kombucha from his parents and then altered the recipe to improve its flavor and quality. "A trend is something that is short lived." Im certain not. "With our product, the popularity has remained consistent and steady. People start to drink it because a family member, friend, or co-worker will personally share their experience."

That each-one, teach-one approach led consumers to become veritable acolytes. It also made the blow a bit harsher when local grocery stores stopped selling kombucha. One local brewer declined an interview for this article because she didn't want her name associated with the Google search term "kombucha."

Admittedly though a difference of 1 or 2 percent alcohol by volume isn't enough to get you drunk. For comparison, **Coors Light** contains about 4.3 percent, while many Belgian trappist ales exceed 9 percent. Kombucha now straddles a thin line between being a bona fide health food beverage and the weakest malt brew on the planet. And a pint the prudence is an awkward position. Meanwhile, the recalls threaten to drain their personal coffers.

Dave blames the fermentation process. He says the kombucha "remains active" while it sits on store shelves so a bottle that ships out with a respectable 1.5 alcohol level could easily creep up to .5 by time of purchase. That's irritating, especially since it's just a few bad bottles that ruin things for everyone else. At present, Dave is contemplating a few solutions, including new labels that would make his product compliant with the law. He hopes to renew production in a few weeks. Resnick says it's a bit more complicated than just relabeling the product, since TTB still hasn't determined whether kombucha is an alcoholic beverage — and if so whether it's a beer, wine or distilled spirit. It's still unclear whether the drink falls under TTB's jurisdiction at all, he said.

Meanwhile, local grocers remain cautiously optimistic. Duong is pushing the local brands. Parriott is trying to placate customers with stimulating tonics such as **Rejuvelac, KeVita**, and **Raw Chi Energy**, all of which are wheat-based, rather than tea-based.

So far they haven't quite closed the gap.

To share this story, type: bit.ly/p/kombuchaban

Rachael.Swan@EastBayExpress.com

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EAST BAY COHOUSING

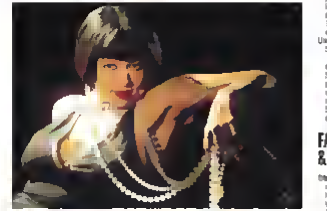
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PRESENTS
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Featured Artists: Rudy Broome, Mark Sulkerman, Allan Wray, Jesse Winnett, Constance Tarrell, Mark Sparks, Eileen Labove, Arnal Lyons, Dionne Nicole Carter, Alexis Miles, Michelle Brantley, Reginald Avant, Michael McManigan, Anthony Abercrombie, Karen Kramer, Barnett Smith, Calvin Gray
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EVENTS & ATTRACTIONS



Kim Nalley

Hot Hot Heat

The Crucible presents its first "fire cabaret."

The Crucible is many things but it's definitely not boring. Now more th in a decade old, the Oakland organization has maden name for itself as the only place in town where you can find n metal foundry, an educational nonprofit...and an arts venue all under one roof. Its regular fundraising shows are equally manifold: always stimulating, and prone to continually up the ante. Last year n *Dracul: Prinx. of Fire* re-imagined Bram Stoker's classic with zombies and a massive fire-breathing dragon. Before that *Firebird: Fantasy de fer* had gotta ballerinas and breakdancers alike taking on Stravinsky's seminal ballet while surrounded by flaming trapeze artists and stunt motorcyclists.

This time around it n a full-scale cabaret replete with dancers, singers, and circus artists of all stripes performing n Prelle bhan-en variety show. That would be enough, but this being the Crucible the show is enhanced by the fact that everything — from the sets to the costumes to the props — is an fire.

Heat is set in an alternate universe in which fire rather than alcohol is banned so the only place to seek fire is underground. Ray Area blues singer **Kim Nalley** plays Scarlet who runs a fire speakeasy, eight lone el reveled steel rocen figured into a sort of distillery run amok, or an industrial refinery as imagined by a pyromaniac Dr. Seuss and populated by contortionists, aerial artists, dancers and fire-eaters. From there, the plot spins loosely into something between an almost Shakespearean comedy and n live cabaret. Actors and dancers play out tales of mistaken identity and romance while Nalley — for whom the role of Scarlet was explicitly conceived — sings jaz standards as well as a few more contemporary pieces such as **Elvis Presley**'s "Burning Love."

Unlike your standard cabaret, and in contrast to previous performances at the Crucible, *Heat* is entirely interactive. Audience members are encouraged to dress up in their Deco best and though much of the action will be going down on the main stage, *Heat* is designed to be walked through, with various demonstrations, installations, and other entertainment — think fire sculpture, torch-wielding burlesque, and welding flash dance — scattered throughout the Crucible n massive West Oakland warehouse (1260 9th St. Oakland). "We're trying to be a little more immersive than we have before," explained producer **Michael Sturtz**. "So instead of people sitting in bleachers watching a show, there's a lot of audience participation, a lot of chances to get up close and personal with it."

In all reflective of the Crucible's ethos, Sturtz explained *Heat* is a versatile metaphor and here it stands in for the creative spark. "We inspire people to let that creative pants come out now we re just doing that in a very showy, hot way." *Heat* runs Friday and Saturday, July 16 and 17 7 p.m., $38–$48. TheCrucible.org or 510-444 0919.

— *Ellen Cushing*

To share this story type: elix.ly/p/freecabaret

ATTRACTIONS

Flower Arbors Marketplace Featuring handmade jewelry sculptures, ceramics, paintings, blending spicy chilis, salsas, fresh fig, floral arrangements, greeting cards, and more kitty. 568-7284726, Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., the Frank Ogawa Plaza at 14th and Broadway, on. Oakland

University of California Botanical Gardens See cacti, you won't find anywhere else more than 12,000 varieties, in fact. Free docent tours Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 1:30 p.m. also daily 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Free admission on the first Thursday of every month. Daily, UC Berkeley campus, mil Gardner, 2001 Centennial Dr. Berkeley. 510-643-2755, BotanicalGarden.Berkeley.edu.

FAIRS, FESTIVALS & FIESTAS

Uptown Grand Street Party Meet and mingle with the Oakland Grown crew and local celebrities at downtown pop-up events. With i cash bar and music. 21+ Thu. July 15. 5-9 p.m. Free Eco Art Bar and Lounge, 118 Grand Avenue, Oakland.

Port Chicago 2nd Magazine Pierpont Weekend Park Dedication Celebrate the redevelopment of the month's covered park unit honoring, of who served at Port Chicago Naval Base during the ships and several bombers Alameda on July 17 1944. With a Monthly speech from park Bishop Ambe, and, followed dedication Pierpont Bocce-ballers against pizza dishes the Pierpont Park Tavern at 949-738-1466 at park, general, weddings.ga. Sat. July 17 11 a.m noon Free 5001 North Crescent Avenue, 3700 Port Chicago Ave., Concord

Mid-Summer Upward Park Street With a barbecue hosted by Two Star Market; a performance by Circo Solar Wheezes; a 1500 pedestrian "Chain-link street Rolling" re and re twirling, juggling fleas, body dancing, juice juggling and more. In to Bring-Pieces-ing farmers information-Sun., July 18 11 a.m. 3:30 p.m. Free Elmwood, 3000 Park Street, Oakland, 510-482-7952, UpwardParkStreet.com/Parks/Facilities/La_Bona.org

Temescal Summer Festival Street Fair With live music, Asian and other Pierpont Sun., July 18 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Free Telegraph Ave and Pierpont St. 1082 Hobo Ave Oakland.

Unity Live Summer Golden Celebration Pierpont will be streaming research conducted in the Unity Live Summer Golden gate and about and Oakland Food Connection will provide information about upcoming, events and register for membership. Sun., July 18 5-7 p.m., Hawthorne welcome. Elmwood Unity High School, 9898 Street St., Pierpont

KIDS

Adopt-A-Rabbit Say Adopt a rabbit, or think you're not for a free hop-thru. But., July 17 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Pets Choice, 1804 Fourth Street, Berkeley.

Carpet, of Our Day Educational and fun weekend animal for the by Animal and Natal Healthy Saturdays, Sundays, 2-3 p.m. Continues through Aug. 31, Free Bath Cow 1252 Mother Ave., Alameda. 510-523-4588, EBParks.org.

Chameleon Gardening Learn about Lizardlys, companions in English and French, and other Friends (Named Pierpont Wed., July 14 2:30 p.m. 12:30 p.m. Free with Elmwood Hillmoon, Berkeley's, Pierpont 510-647-1101 Haleck.org.

Children's Fairyland Weekend Activities Kidsberg and Puppet Theater, Storybook, children's theater shows, the months of 9th day and more Saturdays, 11 a.m., Sundays, 11 a.m., Sat. Children's Fairyland 699 Elmwood Ave (at Lake Merritt) Oakland 3352 22239, Fairyland.org.

Create Cube Bonnie Pollution about a memoir class introducing kids 3-5 to the seventh world in a hands-on way Berkeley, ten-pound, space a limited. First Saturday of every decade, 10-11:30 a.m. & 2:30-4 p.m. residents $8, nonresidents $11, Chrysler Hills Berkeley Park, 6000 Pattersons Stanwhit, Pierpont 510-795-3380, EBParks.org.

Circus Circo Solmaro Island With Amazed and mans Wed., July 14, 3:30 p.m. free Ray-Ban Pablo Library 3090 C St., Hayward.

PICKS

Colonel Gail Halvorsen

Doesn't appears to be a big deal for heroic airman, because back in the war was **Mike "Sully" Sullenberger** there was **Colonel Gail Halvorsen**, who famously dropped candy on the children of Berlin and who will be speaking on Sunday, July 16 at the **Bursell of Latter-Day Saints** (655 Old Orchard Rd Danville). The open-



510-293-8886, Library.Hayward-ca.gov.

Concert Flowers & Juggling Guides Juggling and piano for kids. Sat. July 17 1 p.m., 5 p.m. Free Hayward Public Library Annex/ Branch, 27300 Patrick Ave Hayward, 510-782-2656, Library.hayward-ca.gov

Fish Feeding Plant Set Birds to orders, Saturday 11 a.m. more as story are fed. Saturdays, 3:3-30 p.m. Sun. July 25, 3-3:30 p.m. Sat. Aug. 22, 3-3:30 p.m., Sun., Aug. 29, 3-3:30 p.m. Chabot on Grizzly Aug. 31 Free Crab Cove, 1252 MacKay Ave Alameda 510-521-0004, EBParks.org.

Discussion and Recreation Songs for very young kids Tue. July 20, 5 p.m., free Hayward Public Library, 835 C St. Hayward, 510-293-8686, Library.hayward-ca.gov.

Learn about Earthquake Safety Information for tykes in the form of Bay Area Regional Prep, and Saving Life during, earthquakes, with a Golden from the Awesome Bill Cross. Wed. July 18 6:30 p.m. 12:30 p.m. Free Marina Children's Museum, 2065 Kittredge St., Berkeley, 510-647-1111, Aimsmd.org.

Games Glasses by crafting Learn about orchids with nature-themed Aimsmd Ages three and up Sat., July 17 11 a.m.-noon, Sat. July 31 11 a.m.-noon, Sat., Aug. 28 11 a.m.-noon, Free Crab Cove, 1252 MacKay Ave Alameda, 510-562-PARK, EBParks.org.

Poetry Aimsmd Out Street Workshop Workshops spanning writing, geography, think Elmwood poetry, and art with Story Aimsmd origins. Registration required Mon., July 28 2-4 p.m. Free, Pleasanton Library 400 Old Street Ave., Pleasanton, 925-931-3400.

Mental Pre Drink Elmwood Children 0-6 Aimsmd for the site in antagonism Old Mind Perishable Chemist and Aggies' Baby Sat. July 17 9 a.m., 1103 Elmwood Street Drink Center 1001 Broadway Pierpont 510-452-0900.

Sound of Advice With food, music, dance, a short dance and more Saturdays, 11 a.m., Sundays, 11 a.m., Sat. Children's Fairyland 699 Elmwood Ave (at Lake Merritt) Oakland 3352 22239, Fairyland.org.

Create Cube Bonnie Pollution about a memoir class introducing kids 3-5 to the seventh world in a hands-on way Berkeley, ten-pound, space a limited. First Saturday of every decade, 10-11:30 a.m. & 2:30-4 p.m. residents $8, nonresidents $11, Chrysler Hills Berkeley Park, 6000 Pattersons Stanwhit, Pierpont 510-795-3380, EBParks.org.

Circus Circo Solmaro Island With Amazed and mans Wed., July 14, 3:30 p.m. free Ray-Ban Pablo Library 3090 C St., Hayward.

tion which took place against the backdrop of the Russian Blockade of West Germany in the wake of World War II, was duplicated by a number of other crews, spanned a month, measure n as hundreds of the Atlantic, and is said to have done wonders for American-German relations after the war. Halvorsen, of course, known as the "Berlin Candy Bomber" will be introduced by Danville mayor **Mike Doyle**. Rsvp. It's return of the airlift, p.m. free, 925-837-9456 — *Ellen Cushing*

Oakland Grown Party

Autumn events, of course, a dime a dozen n the East Bay but **Oakland Grown**'s *Public Party* prom ises s good time for it very good n sc Prompted by similar groups in Portland and Seattle ded by th **Oakland Merchant's Leadership Forum**, Oakland Grown a merchants, artists and eaters have promised locally owned and Independents operated businesses in Oakland for yours. On Thursday July 15, the group hosts a party at Era (14 Grand Ave., Oakland), wi ere anyone

or conditioning man in Bum twenties. Tuesdays, 8-10 p.m. 55-326 suggested Elmwood Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Ave Berkeley, 510-548-8876, Pacific Center.org.

LOUD about Drama Drop-in yoga for LGBT youth Tuesdays: arts/crafts/writing/music. Thursdays: the topics/guest speakers. Fridays: queer-related video games. Tuesdays, 4-6 p.m. Thursdays, 4-6 p.m., Fridays, 4-6 p.m., Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-8283, RainbowCenter.org.

Transgender Legal Clinic Aid & Project East Bay and the Transgender Law Center Outlaw a monthly legal clinic, whereby you can visit one-on-one with an attorney for thirty minutes to Aimsmd transgender-related issues. Third Saturday of every decade, 9-11 a.m. Transgender Law Center 1095 Telegraph Ave Pierpont 415-581-1676, Transgender-LawCenter.org.

Trip Up Light Fantastic Beginners are Pierpont to learn and participate in two-step East and West Coast swing, salsa, Aimsmd nightclub Pierpont, about Lindy and and dances. Fans and Thirty Friday of every month, 7:30-11 p.m. 510-524 dancing some. Elmwood Hindon, 510-763-1343, hopehallgreatmusic.org.

Lake Merritt Dance Center 2700 Broad Ave., Pierpont 510 594-2178 LakeMerritt-DanceCenter.org.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Stroating Liberty Political Discussion Aimsmd Third Sunday of every decade. 11 a.m. 1 p.m. Third Wednesday of every month, 6-8 p.m. First Sunday of every decade 11 a.m. 1 p.m. First Wednesday of every month 6-8 p.m. Commons through Sec. St., Lake Merritt Pierpont & Lounge 2221 Broadway Elmwood 510-451-1417 LaborSolidarity.com

East Bay Professional Filmmakers Mixer Networking, socializing and discussion with filmmakers from Oakland, Pierpont and Berkeley. Thu., July 15, 7-9 p.m. Free Expression Center for Bowl Media, 6901 Shellmound St., Emeryville Expression.edu

Sympathy, Breast Right Bring along your Aimsmd meme the barbecue and Potions what's Street Sunday, 8 a.m. Free Long Road 3124 Shoreline Ave Berkeley 315 548-0791

Pen Pals Aimsmd at free to live people compete for prizes, dessert by Aimsmd and Chrissy Third Berkeley of every decade 1230-1:30 p.m. Free Elmwood Lounge 8888 San Pablo Ave. Sundays, 510-548-2080, TheElmoorLounge.com.

LGBT

East Bay Bi-Friendly Berkeley Lunch for the "Bi-Friendly" night here. Bi-Friendly.org. Third Tuesday of every month, 7:30 p.m., free Ala Carpenter Cafe 2600 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-845-0423

Berkeley Job Discussion Group for gay, bi

SPORTS & OUTDOORS-PARTICIPATORY

Bike Tours of Pierpont Pierpont tours of Pierpont Bicycle-ists, pedestrians, commercial center/commerce.org or 340-238-3554. Third Sundays, 10 a.m. Main Elmwood Elmwood of California, 1600 Oak St. Pedestrian Plaza, 1600 Oak St., Alameda.

Pierpont Table Tennis Club Open to everyone. Pierpont training and tournament Sundays: 12:30pm to 2:30. Open play, training & tournament Sundays 12:30pm-2:30pm. Open play and Aimsmd Alameda, 1900 Short. Open play and training Tuesdays, 7:30pm-9:30pm. Tournament & Sundays 12:30pm-2:30pm Thursdays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Berkeley, 10:30 a.m. 10:30 p.m. 1347 Berkeley, Pierpont Elmwood Academy pm.aimsmd, 1966 Grayson Creek Pierpont 1966.

Ogeby Bay Pierpont and row a boat Table on all of mountains: recreation and dust upon. Pre-registration Berkeley by July 14 ages elementary and 510-893-0896. Fri., July 15, 2 p.m. Free Pierpont Hill Aquatic Park, 347 Lagoon Dr., Pleasant Hill, 510-943-0896, PleasantHillRec.com

Golden Hills Five Pierpont hike Aimsmd hour miles round trip to the top of Briarcliff Peak, in a nature area not usually open to the public. Sun., July 18, 8:30 a.m. 2 p.m. $10, Briarcliff Peak, Regional Recreation, north end of Laughlin Rd., Livermore.

5th Annual Josh Brook Hoop Classic for Special Aimsmd, of Pierpont Conference, with means and Pierpont 3 and Rifle. a children's race, followed by an dessert ceremony and more. Sun. July 18 5:30 p.m. $15-$25 Pierpont Sports Sheriff's Rifles Training Center 6000 Madigan Road Dublin 925-551-6978 www.pleasantvalleysports.org.

SPORTS-SPECTATOR

Pierpont A's vs. Bonnie Red Sox Mon. July 19 7:05 p.m., Tue. July 20, 7:05 p.m., $14-$220 Coliseum 7000 Coliseum Way Oakland.

Submissions for calendar listings should be e-mailed to Calendar@EastBayExpress.com or mailed to Calendar Editor, East Bay Express, 5301 3rd St. Oakland, CA 94607. Deadline is 14 days prior to the event date.

BEST OF THE EAST BAY PARTY
home grown
EAST BAY EXPRESS PRESENTS
Playing on the Blues Stage
Guitar Mac and His Blues Express
Guitar Mac and His Blues Express
When you think of the blues, you think B.B. King, Muddy Waters..... That signature guitar sound that identifies this music as the blues. This style of music is very deep, very emotional, full of dynamics and intensity.
Guitar Mac and His Blues Express exemplifies the blues ideal. He may be from Arkansas, but his music is pure Mississippi Delta Blues. He was introduced to playing the blues guitar at a very young age learning the Delta style which is still vibrant in that region. He moved to the South Bay in 1968 and has relentlessly pursued opportunities to perform and demonstrate this style of music to the masses. Guitar Mac has been playing the Sacramento Blues Festival since 1983, and has performed all over Europe
Guitar Mac has released nine albums worldwide, and has been graced with many prestigious awards, including Sacramento's Key to the City, Blues DJ of the Year, Radio Producer of the Decade, and been inducted into the West Coast Blues Hall of Fame
Guitar Mac and His Blues Express' new album River City Shuffle shows us that the blues is far from extinction. The blues is alive and evolving, and you can hear the growth in each new show and album by Guitar Mac His Blues Express.
Website
www.guitarmac.com
myspace.com/guitarmac

MUSEUMS & GALLERIES



Charles Byrne's *Spine Pile Parker CO*

Seeing Things

Thirty-six photographers define the state of the art.

***Glimpses in Time*, Joyce Gordon Gallery**'s annual international juried competition returns. This year's edition, curated by **Bart Ross**, honors San Francisco portraitist and nature photographer **Imogen Cunningham**, a founding member of f/64 and later a colleague of Ansel Adams, Dorothea Lange, and Minor White in the Photography Department at the California School of Fine Arts. That school, now rebranded the **San Francisco Art Institute**, by a happy coincidence, is where **Linda Connor** the show's judge now teaches. The 52 images she selected comprise portraiture, landscape, and abstraction and range from demanding "straight" traditional photography in various types of digital magic. Among the posed portraits here are **Adrienne V. Miller**'s "Mother and Child, Sikkim, India" **Sarah-Marie Lund**'s wary schoolgirl, "Elizabeth"; and **Walter Athens**' "Hedley Calhoun Quartet 2." More spontaneous shots include **Elise Tanner**'s playful girl/kitten duo, "Dana & Legos." **Harry Longstreet**'s young couple ensconced at a shadowy diner booth **Kyle Sharp**'s two boys, half-hidden and half-dressed in "Untitled," and the young woman in **Andi Lüppönen**'s "Untitled" in classical repose on her nomadic subterfuge bed. Contemporary landscapes include **K. Parker Blackburn**'s "Keeper's House," within which a storm rages and its cirrus clouds. **D.B. Stovall**'s "Hornell, New York," with its insurance signage and alarmingly supersized clock. **Richard Sargent**'s "Door 2590 Telegraph Ave. Berkeley," covered in torn stained papers. **Peter Takamori**'s "Fireball" sizzling above city lights. **Peter Dembinski**'s beautiful amorous "Fire in the Sky Detroit." **Nancy Dunranteau**'s park bench overlooking billowing smokestacks in "Man vs. Nature Untitled I." **Eric Zeigler**'s powerful "School House" and "Cut Branches." **John Vias** abstract architectural study "Windowed Wall." **Charles Byrne**'s enigmatic "Snow Pile Parker CO" and "Snow Breeding Mutant, Monumental CO." **Donna J. Wan**'s gun emplacements at sunset, "On the Coast" and **Barbara B. Collins**' "The Clinic/Alcatraz," with its barred windows casting ghostly shadows.

More experimental are **Ashley Eberlein**'s "On the Inside," juxtaposing a woman's breast and a sectioned fig, **Jenni fer Holmes**' male nude climbing a bare tree in "Ascending a Crown of Thorns." **Vanessa Woods** collages of Greek statuary and reflections, "A Disturbance in Mirrors." **Terri Garland**'s "Delta Creation Theory" and **Emily C-P Wang**'s "Untitled" both employing triptych formats to expand time and space; and **Jackson Patterson**'s "Dance and Monument Valley" and **Lacey Haslam**'s "Boy in Field" and "Brothers," digitally setting historical images within bleak landscapes. *Glimpses in Time 2010* runs through July 30 at Joyce Gordon Gallery (1406 14th St., Oakland). 510-465-6928 or JoyceGordonGallery.wordpress.com

— DeWitt Cheng

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ART GALLERIES

57th Street Gallery, Array of Artwork by Grimnuh Artists. With work by Allen Wirtz, Tillie Evans, Dionne Carter and others. Opening reception July 3, 2 pm-7 pm Tuesday-Saturdays, 11 a.m. Continues through July 31. Free. **Artists Artwork in Progress by Flaish Abuso** will be working on and decorating their work. Sat. July 17 2-7 p.m. 510 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-654-6914 | 57thStreetGallery.com.

ADH Gallery, 2010 National Juried Exhibition with work from dozens of artists from all over the nation, selected by Linda Mendoza, Director, San Francisco Museum of Craft & Art's Artists Gallery. Sundays, 12-5 p.m., Mondays-Saturdays, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Continues through Aug. 21. 1652 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-843-2527 | ADHGallery.com

Grimnuh American Art and Grimnuh Goodies, Part Forward: Grimnuh Spirituality in Contemporary Black Art Exhibit curated by Darnell Brandon, featuring work by Duane Bennett, Nicole Brown, Richardson D'Ancellotti, Willie L. Little, Kamau Amu Patton, Aaron Sanderlin, and Linda Sanderlin. Through Aug. 18. Sargent Johnson Gallery, San Francisco. 415-902-2949 | AAACC.org

Allsorts Arts Gallery, Silk Paintings by Rukiyah Foucault Tuesdays-Saturdays, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Sundays, 12-5 p.m. Continues through July 31. 1251 Solano Ave., Albany. 510-526-8558.

Alphonso Karmus Gallery With Paintings, drawings, sculptures, and mixed-media constructions by Nathaniel Parsons. Opening reception July 8, 6pm-9pm. Thursdays-Sundays, 12-7 p.m. Continues through July 31. 2548 Bancroft Way, Berkeley. 849-630-0189

Grimnuh Salon and Gallery, Robert Bleichley With opening reception July 17 from 7pm-9pm. Tuesdays-Fridays, 10 a.m. 7 p.m. Saturdays, Sundays, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Continues through Sept. 15. 1857 Solano Ave., Berkeley. 510-527-3100.

Grimnuh Wine Lounge & Cafe, Linda Openness and Jack Summerlin Drawings and paintings by two local artists. Tuesdays-Sundays, 12-11 p.m. Continues through July. 1A 1853 Bonanza St., Walnut Creek.

Autobody Fine Art Medium Rare Drawings and mixed-media work T. Joseph Bates and Tony Mancini. Opening reception June 11 at 7 pm. Wednesdays-Sundays, 12-6 p.m. Continues through Aug. 8. Free. 1577 Park Street, Alameda.

Bedford Gallery, Unbound: A Harrison Exhibition of Book Art Featuring Recognition Thu July 15, 6-8 p.m. Free. 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. 925-295-1417 | BedfordGallery.org

Berkeley Art Robert Lanoi Garstrum featuring artwork of Robert Brady, Squeak Carnwath, Jess Collins, Ramekins Sherwood, Elvia Stein, and Gale Wagner. Through Aug. 14 from 12-6 p.m. Wednesday-Sunday. 1275 Walnut St., at the Civic Park. Berkeley. 510-644-0800, BerkeleyArtCenter.org.

Berkeley Public Library, Grimnuh Grimnuh Warm Tones Photographs by Ken Maddren. Mondays-Saturdays, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Continues through Sept. 27. 2090 Kittredge St., Berkeley. 510-981-6100, BerkeleyPublicLibrary.org.

Boonaree, Paintings by Kaira Keller Through Sept. 15. 55 Webster St., Oakland. 510-444-12 03. Boonaree.com.

Grimnuh Gallery, Everyday is not the Same Work by Hadley Williams and Tahlia Mangis. Starting July 15. Thursdays-Saturdays, 12-6 p.m. Continues through Aug. 6. 4301 17th St., Ste. #301, Oakland, BayKarma.org.

Castle in the Air, Inclement Weather: The Paintings of Linda Grimnuh Opening, Berkeley June 27 6 pm-9 pm Mondays-Saturdays, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Continues through July 31. Free. 1805 Fourth St., Berkeley.

The Chapoose, Gallery, Commanding: Annual Group Linda With work by Alison Griffiths, Alecia Gren, Eric Stanzler, Jeanine Lovato and others. Opening Berkeley July 16 6pm-9pm. Fest Friday Reception August 6 7pm-10pm. Starting the August 8 3pm-9pm, Thursdays-Sundays. 12-6 p.m. Continues through Aug. 8. 1557 19th Grimnuh, Oakland.

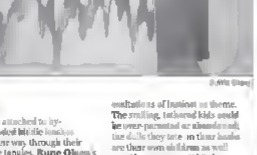
Craft and Medford Arts Gallery, Bridges, to Grimnuh Paintings and mixed media by Michael Balch. Reception and live drum performance July 15. 5pm-8pm. Artist talk and Grimnuh performance by the artist August 19 3pm-8pm. Mondays-Fridays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Continues through Aug. 27. 1515 Clay St., Oakland. 510-682-2190.

PICKS



Medium Rare

T. Joseph Enos and **Tony Hsiang** explain the sense of identity in works that meet art's traditional transcendental truths. Enos sculptures and assemblages paintings employ impermanent, imperfect, "lowly" materials like aluminum foil and installation forms ("Hot Dog Harvest," "Frozen Composition Party," "Personal Totem"), while his installation, video, and Belly Prints delve from absurdist performances involving the contusion of various substances from the navel to a smearing of his stomach. Hsiang's seven and nine-tiered works on multimedia panels set human forms ("Feel It In My Bones") or animal-mankind figures within giddily forceful towering structures — fingers, wiring, piping, ducts, and brush-font haikus. In the two-part triptych "Left Right Left Right" wedge-shaped nail forms recreational soldiers and paper lanterns hover above the in front of small house-boarded perimeter fences. Gross eyes blacked out. **Medium Rare** runs through August 8 at Autobody Fine Art (3547 Park Ave., Emeryville) 510-595-2668 or AutobodyFineArt.com. — *DeWitt Cheng*



If Only

Five tots attached to hypersexualized bristle bonkers wend their way through their monofilar tangles. **Rune Olsen's** sculptures, made of steel wire, newspaper, archival tape, shredded thank-you notes, and acrylic medium — and sporting a mummy-rapin eyes, replicating the artist's own baby blues — are many artifacts. Nevertheless, Dr. Jekyll disconcerting, and an improvement on Olsen's pieced four work, hyperbolic duets of love and death between humans and animals. Here, psychological complexity replaces the confusions of humanist as theme. The smiling, tattooed kids could be some parental or schoolmarm, but dolls they are in their hands are their own multiples as well as self-portraits. "If Only (Organ)" and "If Only (Quasar)" seem relatively benign in tone, but "If Only (Shannon)," with its penile, pigtailed protagonist, takes on, perhaps, more disturbing, transcendent subject matter. Olsen's drawing studies are also insightful. *If Only* runs through July 17 at **Johannson Projects** (1250 Tri-Valley Ave., Oakland) 510-444-9440 or JohanssonProjects.com. — *D.C.*

National Color Arts.org

Emeryville Public Library & Gallery. "All Journal Us." Exhibit opening and music. Opening reception July 23, 1 pm-4 pm. Saturdays, Oakland, 2-6 p.m. Continues through July 31. Free. 885 Emeryville, Oakland, 510-635-1900. OaklandLibrary.org.

Richfield Banks of Berkeley. Lisa Gano Reading from her novel *Why a Girl Left* in World War II-era Indonesia. Sun. July 18, 3 p.m. Free. 2086 University Ave. Berkeley. 510-540-2350. EWRT.com

Fraguela Art Gallery. Two Artists Five Perspectives. Still work in various media by Hilary Sadler, Ed Fraguela, Pam Fraguela, Dorian Leigh and Sarah Potter. Opening Reception, Friday, 1 pm to 9 pm. Thursdays-Saturdays, 12-6:30 pm. Continues through Aug. 21. 2013 Stockton Ave., El Cerrito. 510-593-9081

Floral Center Conference. With digital paintings by Alameda artists. Fight sculptures by Michael Clarke. Mondays-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Continues through July 31. Free. 1091 Main St., Pleasanton. 510-462-1702. TheFloralCenter.com.

Gumilla Gallery. Bay Area Funk and Soul Legends on Display. Paintings of and inspired by Bay Area Soul Bonnie Hawkins. Days-Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sundays, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Mondays, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Tuesdays, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Continues through Aug. 29. Free. 1999 Gumilla Ave., Berkeley. 510-845-2929. Gumilla.com

Hollow Oakland, Juicy. With new work by Dave Meeker. Opening reception July 15, 6pm-9pm. Starting July 16. Fri., July 16 6-9 p.m. Mondays-Saturdays, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Continues through Aug. 28. 1798 Shattuck Ave. Berkeley

Johannson Projects. 11 Only... Sculpture by Rune Olsen. Through July 17. 2300 Telegraph Ave. Oakland, 510-444-9440, JohanssonProjects.com

John F. Kennedy University Arts and Consciousness Gallery. Arts & Consciousness 7 Regional Exhibition 2010. With work by Jaycee carroll.com is the university's Bachelor of Fine Arts Master of Arts in Transformative Arts, and Master of Fine Arts programs. Monday-Friday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Continues through July 30. 2956 San Pablo Ave. Berkeley, 510-649-0400. JFKU.edu/gallery.

Kala Gallery and Art Institute. Residency Projects Part I With work by Kal Barteaux, Rhet Duncan, Katy Ingalls, Laura Paulin and Elizabeth Wood. Opening reception July 15. 6pm-9pm. Starting July 16. Tuesdays-Fridays, 12-5 p.m., Saturdays, 12-4:30 p.m. Continues through Aug. 21. 1060 Heinz Ave. Berkeley. 510-548-2977. Kala.org

Kala Workshop Gallery. Women's Oakland Printery Art Exhibition. Forms of Skill With work by Michele Prud. Stefany Bothorn, Carrie Lederer and more. Opening reception June 26 from 1pm-5 pm. Through Aug. 1. 4001 2nd Ave. Berkeley

Lindsay Wines Bonnie Hawkins. Poetry On Canvas Reception July 17. 3pm-5pm reception/Thursdays, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Continues through Aug. 31. 12301 Internal Blvd. San Leandro. 925-913-3300

Berkeley 20 Berkeley/Berkeley Rising. With work by Brett Meeker, Peter Hoang, Kathleen Heng, and others. Berkeley reception July 2. 6 pm-9 pm. Thursdays-Saturdays, 12-6 p.m. Continues through July 31. 475 25th St., Oakland. 510-444-7166. MarinoTreanty.com

Round Room Sands Gallery. Abbie Goldstone with Bonnie Abbott Pattern and textile work. With an authentic-participatory intimacy party July 2. Immersion workshop and BBQ July 11 noon-3 pm. and through exposure July 24, noon-3 pm. Saturdays, Sundays, 1-4 p.m. Sat. July 17 12-3 p.m., Sat., July 24 12-3 p.m. Continues through July 31. Free. 4321 Telegraph Ave. Oakland

Sacred Rose Tattoo/SRC Gallery. Rose Bush at the Love Tree Bonnie Hawkins With paintings by Amy Amber. Opening reception July 17 from 6pm. reception. Tuesdays, Thursdays-Saturdays, 12-8 p.m. Continues through Aug. 29. 1720 University Ave. Berkeley. 510-486-0383. SacredRose.abbo.com

San Pablo Arts Gallery. Printmakers & Journal Makers With prints by Sheryl Avery, Linda de Noel, Barbara Rogers and Rae Tarnoky and journals by Jill Rummell and Rosie Smith. Berkeley Reception July 17 1pm-3pm Starting July 18 Saturdays, Oakland, 12-4 p.m. Continues through Aug. 22. 1918 Alameda St., 13631 San Pablo Ave., San Pablo. 510-636-2803. SBSanPablo.org.

Aloha Bakery, Linus Lanoue and Pianos With paintings by Anne Subramaniam, Justine Lai, and Mark Ruwedel, drawings by Patricia Thomas; photographs by Chris Kleiber and prints and an installation by Ryan Staples. Opening reception July 2. 7 pm-9 pm. Thursdays-Sundays, 12-6 p.m. Continues through Aug. 14. 3778 Telegraph Ave. Oakland

Pianist Dramatic Arabesques With work by Susan Lehmann, Rafael Mahfouz, Heidi Meier, and Lamar Shadrineau. Reception July 10. 6 pm-8 pm. Saturdays, 12-6 p.m. Continues through Aug. 13. Free. 2865 29th St., Oakland.

Upstairs Gallery. 2-D/3-D With drawing, sculpture, painting and other work exploring the relationship between the two-dimensional and three-dimensional. Curated by Matt Andrews, Jessica Hoskins, Paula McDonough, Lauren Kennedy and Kristin Leonard. Opening reception July 18, 3pm-5pm. Starting July 18. Sats., July 18, 3-5 p.m., Thursdays-Saturdays, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Continues through Sept. 18. 1815 Clarke Ave. Opening 510-339-1258 Gallery.com

Paulus Gallery. Paint Group show with Carrie Vitic, Gina Lamont, Anne Nathan, Bonnie Rubin and Rosie Head. Opening reception July 17. 3pm-5pm. Tuesdays-Saturdays, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Fri. Aug. 6 6-9 p.m. Continues through Aug. 21. 451 25th St., Oakland.

MUSEUMS

Museum, Museum, Rubin Gamroth. With work by California artists. Gallery reception: July 10. 1 pm-3 pm. Wednesdays-Fridays, Sundays, 1:30-5 p.m. Continues through July 30. Free. 2324 Alameda Ave. Alameda. 510-337-1615

Gallery of Illusions. Michael Vella At-Risk Kara Maroyan, Solo exhibition of paintings. Through Aug. 29. **Gallery of Enlightenment: Bridging and Borrowing from the Land of Dreams** Exhibit featuring new acquisitions to the museum's collection of Buddhist and Hindu art. Through Aug. 1. **Thinkers Exhibitions. Contemporaries** Work exhibits sculpture and furniture carved of abstract designs. Through Nov. 30, 2011. 2635 Durant Ave., Berkeley. 510-642-0808. BAMPFA.berkeley.edu.

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THEATER & DANCE

COMEDY

Berkeley at the Improv Weekly stand-up with Adam Ferrell Tues/Wed., 8:30 p.m. free. Uptown Music Bar & Lounge 1512 Franklin St., Oakland. 510-834-1467. BerkeleyattheImprov.com

Berkeley Off Broadway Oakland With comedians from C. Brady Central. With Jeff and more. Thursdays, Fridays 6-9:30 p.m. Continues through July 30. 510 Ninth Penthouse, Oakland. 510-444-7171. AlbertPonkhosa.com

Bad Jokes Vol. 1 Comedy Tour Wed., July 14 7:30 p.m. $13.50-$28.50. Tommy T's Comedy & Steakhouse. 5084 Berkeley Rd., Pleasanton. 925-227-1800.

Wilkie Tyler and Louise Thu. July 15, 7:30 p.m. Fri., July 16, 7:30 & 9:30 p.m. Sat., July 17, 7 & 9:30 p.m. Sun., July 18, 7 p.m. $10-$20. Tommy T's Berkeley & Steakhouse. 5084 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton. 925-227-1800.

LIVE VARIETY

Apollo 808 Style A monthly cabaret-style fundraiser for talented professional and amateur performers. Third Saturday of every month, 8-9 p.m. $5-$10. Black Repertory Theater, 3201 Adeline St., Berkeley. 510-652-2120.

Da Grandz With music, spoken word, visual art and more by Asian talents. Hosted by Brad DeVarney. Thu., July 15, 7:30 p.m. $10. La Peña Cultural Center. 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2568. LaPena.org.

The Bhangrapalooza Female artists showcase following music, art, theater, and spoken word. Third Friday of every month, 8 p.m. Centennial Hall, Sec. 1. $5-$10. Herrick Home Music & Arts, 3098 Maple Ave., Oakland. AspireBetterCommunity.com/DivinityNetwork/InstaArts

THEATER & PERFORMING ARTS

East 14th: True Tales of a Homeless Player One-man show by Oakland native Thomas Reed. Fri. July 16, 9 p.m. Sun. July 18, 1 p.m., Sat., July 24, 8 p.m. Sun. July 25, 7 p.m. Sat., July 31, 8 p.m. Sun., Aug. 1, 7 p.m. $20-$25, sliding scale. Reserved seating $30. The Ashby Stage, Berkeley Arts Center. 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley. 510-644-6043. TheAshbyStage.org.

Pantagraph Local production of the Broadway musical. Written by Mark O'Donnell, Thomas Meehan, Marc Shaiman, and Scott Wittman and inspired by Andy Spletzer. Wednesdays, Fridays-Sundays, 8 p.m. Sun. July 25, 8 p.m. Continues through July 31. 925-943-7469. Woodminster Amphitheater. 3300 Joaquin Miller Road, Oakland. 510-531-9581. WoodminsterAmphitheater.com

Read & Fire Cabaret Cabaret with pyrotechnics, modeled after a 1920s speakeasy. With jazz and blues vocalist Kim Nalley. Aerial artist, by Scandal A. Axelrod, and the advance. Rialto Events Plays Rumored. Plus live installations, music, writing, wedding, and more individual acts. Conceived and directed by musical Shady Du. July 15, 9:30-1:45. The Crucible. 1760 7th St., Oakland. 510-444-7619. Rhn.net/the-ug.

In the Belly of the Whale Jonathan Kaplan's one-man show about the meaning of modern Jewish identity, cubed from interviews with 18 people. Sat. July 17, 8 p.m., free. Chanukiah Hall, 2929 Prince St., Berkeley. 510-704-9587. Chanukiah.org.

Laughter on the 23rd Floor Neil Simon's comedy performed by the Shotgun Players' Ensemble Starring Jude Siri. Thursdays-Saturdays, 8 p.m. Sundays, 2 p.m. Continues through Aug. 1. $15-$29. Theatre leaves Ensemble Theatre, 1345 Lawrence St., Berkeley. Break. 925-486-9116.

Left of Q: A lesbian-queer musical comedy following Dorothy as she leaves Kansas and lands in San Francisco's Fri., July 16, 8 p.m. Sat., July 17, 8 p.m., Sun., July 18, 7 p.m. Thu., July 8, 8 p.m., $20. The Ashby Stage, 2120 Ashby Ave., Berkeley. 510-841-6500. ShotgunPlayers.org

Much Ado About Nothing Theatre based on the famous book. Written and directed by Gary Graves, with Mark Farrell and Cole Alexander Smith. Starring July 17 Thursdays-Saturdays, 8 p.m. Sundays, 6 p.m. Continues through Aug. 27. 614-325 sliding scale, $25 advance. Berkeley City Club, 2315 Durant Ave., Berkeley. 510-848-7800. BerkeleyCityClub.com.

Mrs. Warren's Profession Bootsy Noun Bernth Cruise Bernard Shaw's delicate, comedy. With cabaret at local feast and drink beverages, and Wednesdays and a discussion with the cast following. Thu July 15 and 25 performances, and other events. The musical for details. Tuesdays-Thursdays, 7:30 p.m., Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m., Sundays, 2 p.m. Continues through Aug. 1. $20-$80. Blues Memorial Amphitheater, 100 Lakeview Ave., Oakland. 510-238-6568. CalShakes.org.

Much Ado About Berkeley Wayne's 9th production of William Shakespeare's play. Directed by Lisa Ebbelt Sigle Sat. July 17, 1 p.m. Free. Berkeley Public Library, 2090 Kittredge St., Berkeley. 510-981-6250.

Time and Time Again Performance of Alan Ayckbourn's trigonometry. Starring July 15, Fridays, Saturdays, 8:30 p.m. Sun. July 18, 2 p.m. Thu. Aug. 5, 8 p.m. Continues through Aug. 7. $7-$16. Brenda Community Center, 2179 Allston Way, Berkeley. 510-764-2445.

Youth Musical Theater Company presents: The Mothers of Britain. World premiere musical drama about the Ludlow coal miners' massacre of 1914. Fri. July 16, 1:30 p.m., Sat. July 17, 2:30 p.m., Sun., July 18, 1 p.m. Fri. July 23, 7:30 p.m., Sat., July 24, 7:30 p.m., Sun. July 25, 2 p.m. $22 general, $18 senior, $12 youth. Julia Morgan Center for the Arts, 2640 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-845-8542. JuliaMorgan.org

PICKS

Speech & Debate

Theme = space character in **Robin Stanton**'s excerpts from *Speech & Debate* a play about sexuality and privacy in the digital age. Surely that's what playwright **Stephen Karam** intended. He played with the theme almost to the point of ostentation characterizing each scene with some relevant rhetorical term and allowing characters to cross-examine each other throughout. As a result, lurid mirrors confront in a wink-wink, nudge-in-gee kind of way. **Stanton** ups the ante by running a series of video montages between scenes, each revolving around a single obvious metaphor (Pan glacial lattice, fireworks and bottles of champagne being uncorked for coming-out parties in agony.) Such visual gags help enhance a script that is already wildly entertaining. Three outcasts join hands to root out a school sex scandal, and wind up cupcakes-in-either in the process. **Mario Guevara, Jason Frank** and **Jayne Deely** are terrific as the troubled teens. **Holli Harm** Ben shines as the fashionable self-absorbed journalist who subjects them to an round of public shaming. Through July 31 at **Aurora Theatre** (2081 Addison St., Berkeley). 634-4435. AuroraTheatre.org. — *Rachel Swan*

Post:Bollat's Concert One

I marvels a dancer with Com pass Contemporary Ballet and OBC/Dance, **Robert Dekkers** launched his own **Post Ballet** company in 2006 to spread that majority that blends the purity of classical ballet technique with the exhilaration of contemporary movement. pairs modern dance, if you will. This week affords two opportunities to see the results, both at **Fort Mason** (Marina Blvd. and Buchanan St., San Francisco) In *Concert One* in the **Cowell Theatre** on Friday and Saturday, July 16 and 17 Post Ballet performs to a diverse musical track of Steve Reich Grizzly Bear and Daniel Bernstein, including a world-premiere collaboration between Dekkers and San Francisco composer **Jacob Wolfkan hauer** (8 p.m. $28-$29). On Wednesday July 21 the 21-and-over crowd can watch Dekkers creating solos all in the Fort Mason Post Ballet Inking with a group of artists that includes Diablo Ballet's **Tina Kay Rahnstedt**. 6 p.m., free. 415-345-7575 or PostBal let.org — *Chanelle Bessette*

Joe Goode's Traveling Light

Invention hasn't taken you somewhere you've never been before in the case of **Joe Goode Performance Group**'s *Traveling Light* that place is San Francisco's **Old Mint** (88 Fifth Street, San Francisco). Opened in 1874 the "Granite Lady" once held a third of America's gold reserves in its vaults, which are rarely open to the public. Wednesdays through Sundays July 7 through Aug. 1 visitors can explore those haunting chambers and peek in on a unique tableau of contemporary dance and museum-era theatrical landscaping costumed within each. Choreographed by Goode a member of UC Berkeley's dance faculty *Traveling Light* explores themes of wealth and lost fortune — fortunately the Old Mint into the new economy. Last year's shows sold out, so advance tickets are recommended. A Sunday Salon including an extra song performed in the vaults, precedes each Sunday performance. 8 p.m., plus 10 p.m. Fri.-Sat. $25-$44. 415-561-6565 or JoeGoode.org — *C.B.*

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LECTURES & LIT

19th-Century Steaks

Searching for Mark Twain's favorite foods Berkeley author Andrew Beahrs pondered opossums and prairie chickens.

Like so many people who settle in California, **Mark Twain** loved to eat. Permeating his oeuvre are memories of many meals relished during long-past childhood summers spent on his uncle's Missouri farm — where the young Twain harvested hickory nuts tapped sugar maples, foraged wild fruit and hunted ducks turkeys, geese, prairie chickens deer opossums and raccoons. *In A Tramp Abroad* he reminisced about breakfasting American-style on huckleberry cakes, coddled eggs and Portuguese steaks from catfishes thick.

"When he writes about those foods so specifically — when



Andrew Beahrs

he writes. The meals: It makes me cry to think of them — you know he's back there in his mind again" said **Andrew Beahrs**, who celebrates those meals in his new book *Twain's Feast: Searching for America's Lost Foods*. "When Twain writes, I can call back the prairie. I can feel the rain of hickory nuts upon

my head, it's almost as if he's meditating," said Beahrs, who traveled from coast to coast seeking dishes and ingredients mentioned in Twain.

In an insane "high-school gymnastics, he ate raccoon with 1,000 other diners, including Miss Arkansas and the Arkansas governor. For the annual fete known as the Gilbert Coon Supper "they brine the raccoon overnight then cut off the fat and cook it with carrots and onions and black pepper. Then they smoke it and pour barbecue sauce over it" said the author who will be at **A Great Good Place for Books** (6120 La Salle Ave. Oakland) on Wednesday, July 21. "It's like a gamy pot roast. It's not something there's a lot of national demand for, but they're doing something distinctive with local ingredients, so it's getting away from the monotony and uniformity that corporations thrive on."

Studying archeology as a UC Berkeley grad student gave Beahrs a taste for writing about history — first in his novels *Strange Saint* and *The Sin Eater*, and now in this homage to a beloved author who wrote ecstatically of coffee, oysters, baked apples, unpasteurized cream — and the ferry-pound, three-foot long Lahontan cutthroat trout that once thrived in Lake Tahoe.

They've been extinct in the lake since 1930, vanquished by diseases and introduced species.

Beahrs was relieved to find Lake urban cutthroats sent too far away in Nevada's Pyramid Lake, where they are prized by the Paiute, tribe on whose land the lake lies. His search for the wild grouse known as prairie chickens proved somewhat sadder.

"During Twain's youth, there were two-to-five million of these birds," said Beahrs. "Twain knew prairie chickens at their absolute peak. They were being hunted literally by the wagon load. But what really did them in was the transformation of American grasslands into cornfields."

Near-extinctions aside, researching the book "was almost entirely a hopeful experience," because although some of Twain's favorite foods are gone or altered beyond recognition, many remain.

"At its best, American food has been fresh and local for a long time. These aren't modern catchphrases." 7 p.m., free. GreatGoodPlace.Indiebound.com

— *Anneli Rufus*

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LECTURES

Berlin and Mao/Tse Tsu Silkin of Inner Colonel Gail Hueburner, who served as the "Berlin Candy Bomber" will be discussing his job as the post-WWII *Hotel Kitty*, in which Berlin and American pilots Summer more than 2 million tons of food to starving Berliners. Hueburner leaves Summer to convey living in the Summer of Berlin, Sun., July 18, 1 p.m. Free. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 9700 Lincoln Blvd., Oakland. 510-531-3777

Rising Yeast Barry Hoch, who designed the menu for the Summer of Berlin, will be Hoch and more will discuss the Hoch of the design profession. RSVP at Hoch@designmuseum.org. Fri., July 16, 6-8 p.m., free. Exposition Center for New Media, 6801 Shellmound St., Emeryville, Expomuseum.info

Introduction to Permaculture Workshop Hoch by Jo Hoch & Jeanette Hoch for Hoch and garden with Christopher Shein, with runs a permaculture called Sol. July 12 10 a.m. 1 p.m., $25; present $20 for Ecology Center discussion. Ecology, 1336 Dealing St., Berkeley. 510-841-3769

The Summer of Berkeley Why We Drank A particularly-beloved about the drawing process. Bring discussion. Sat., July 17 7:30 p.m. $10-$40; members, $40 general registration at Center 2548 Summer Ave., Richmond. 510-620-6712 TheArtOfNotCaring.org

Revolution: Why It's discussing Why It's discussing What It's All About While screening, and discussion with Joe Sullivan, Mondays, 7 p.m. Continues through July 23. Berkeley Architect discussion Books, 2425 Channing Way. Berkeley. 510-848-1188. www.wordsmiths.org/

Louisa Summer Books Freshwater Sharing knowledge and experiences from his 30+ years of teaching Summer Books. p.m., Free. The Lone Books 1568 Solano Ave. Berkeley. 510-526-5252 BonePhotography.com

LITERARY EVENTS

Allegra Stratton Reading from her novel *The Rosie Project*, about a set of which takes place in the East Bay. Wed., July 14 7:30 p.m. Free. Mrs. Dalloway's, 2904 College Ave. Berkeley. 510-704-8722 Mrsdalloways.com

Berlin/Lebanon Reading from her and *Here And Hoch Wall*. Thurs., July 17, 7 p.m. A Great Good Place for Books, 6120 La Salle Ave. Oakland. 510-238-8180. GreatGoodPlace.Indiebound.com

Summer of Berkeley Lebanon/Inner Group Third Monday of every month, 7 p.m. Free. Hosted & Books, 5004 Bay St., Emeryville. 510-547-3708 Mrsdalloways.com

Cooper/Powell Reading from his collection about Pet Cemeteries, Summer of the Cemetery Wed., July 14, 7:30 p.m. Free. Books, 2476 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley. 510-845-2087 Mrsdalloways.com

An Evening with Christopher Summer The Author and critic will be discussing his memoir, *Summer*, with longtime friend Steve Wasserman Thu. July 15, 7:30-9:30 p.m., $10. Jewish Community Center of San Francisco, 3245 Channing Way. Berkeley. 510-848-5696.

Jeffrey Lin Talking about his non-Summer and middle-class, *House Building Begin* Tue. July 20, 7 p.m. Free. Books Inc., Berkeley. 1091 4th St. Berkeley.

Jay Hinton Discussing his book Seasons Blooming of South Asia and its Hoch, and sharing images and locally-sourced from her research on Sundarbans Indian evening of Summer Hoch. Thu. July 15, 7:30 p.m., free. Books, 1336 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley. 510-525-6660

Justin Hoch discussing his new book *The Pursuit of Hoch*, July 16, 7 p.m., Free. Books, Inc. Berkeley. 1091 4th St., Berkeley.

Beverly Hoke Reading and Discussing her new *Hoch Dust*, Wed. July 14, 7 p.m., free. *A Great Good Place for Books*, 6120 La Salle Ave. Oakland. 510-238-8180. GreatGoodPlace.Indiebound.com.

Laura Hoch-Avery Presenting her new history of the East Bay *Regional Park Hoch Living Landscape: The Extraordinary Rise of the East Bay Regional Park District and How It Preserved 200,000 Acres*. Thu. July 15, 7:30 p.m. Free. Mrs. Dalloway's, 2904 College Ave. Berkeley. 510-704-8722 Mrsdalloways.com

Brent Tagerman, Ismael Hoch and Mary Shafer Wu Reading from their

PICKS

Laura McCreery

Leading 75 years of environmentalism **Laura McCreery**'s new book *Hoch Landscape: The Extraordinary Rise of the East Bay Regional Park District and How It Preserved 200,000 Acres* celebrates the nation's largest regional park district. Meet McCreery — who directs the California Supreme Court Oral History Project at UC Berkeley — at **Mrs. Dalloway's** (2904 College Ave., Berkeley) on Thursday July 15 7:30 p.m. free. MrsDalloways.com — *Anneli Rufus*

Matt Stewart

Last year on Bestille Day, **Matt Stewart** began releasing his debut novel *The French Revolution* line by line on Twitter. A year and a day later at **Books Inc.** (1760 Fourth St., Berkeley) on Thursday July 15, Stewart discusses his nonstop remagining of the revolution, set in late-18th-century San Francisco, with an abuse on-pastry chef and a nonsensical-cuspon salesman as Marie Antoinette and Louis XIV. 7 p.m. free. BooksInc.net —*A.R.*

Oren Harman

Noted scientist **George Price** was a fervent atheist before a religious epiphany in 1970. A newly Christian Price began nursing for London's homeless, but his inability to be more altruistic led the to take his own throat in 1974. At **Books Inc.** (1760 Fourth St., Berkeley) on Friday, July 16, **Oren Harman** and Price's daughter **Kathleen and Annamarie Price** discuss Harman's book *The Price of Altruism*. 7 p.m., free. Booksinc.net — *A.R.*

Penny Warner Peggy Dulle, and Priscilla Royal

Both **Penny Warner** has authored fifty plus books, including the Connor West



phal mystery series featuring a dead journalist sleuth. At the **Albany Library** (1247 Marin Ave., Albany) on Wednesday, July 20, she is part of a **Sisters in Crime panel** discussion with fellow mystery authors Peggy Dulle (*Apple Pies and Pie in Veil Pots, Death Is Churning and Pie*) and **Priscilla Royal** (*Chambery of Death, Wine of Violence*). 6 p.m. free. ACLibrary.org — *A.R.*

More Listings Online
Get info about
more more
library events
at EastBayExpress.com
or m.EastBayExpress.com

published and unpublished poetry and prose. Sat., July 12 3 p.m., free. Eastwind Books, 2066 Kittredge St. Berkeley. 510-548-2350 EWBB.com.

Inner Summer Presenting *The Evolution of Everything*, which discusses the story behind and misconceptions surrounding, Darwin's theory of evolution. Wed., July 16, 7 p.m. Free. Books Inc. Berkeley, 1760 4th St., Berkeley.

Inner/Lebanon Reading her *Hoch The French Revolution* Thu. July 15, 7 p.m., free. Books Inc. Berkeley 1760 4th St., Berkeley.

Mel Boden discussing his new Inner Spider and Shadow's Fairytown: *The First Jewish Summer*, from the Creators of Superman Tue. July 20 7:30 p.m. Moe's Books, 2476 Telegraph Ave. Berkeley. 510-849-2087 Mrsdalloways.com

No Summer Left Behind Community Service Project Hoch special guest, reduce and picture Inner author/illustrator Rebecca Hoch, Summer time/lobby by of Inner. Read Inner signing. Sat., July 19 11:30 a.m. 12:30 p.m., Free. RaisinEARS, 2523 Piedmont Ave. El Cerrito 510 524-9697

Dana Nathan, eleanora Price, and Rosemary Price Speaking the nonfiction book *The price of Altruism*. With the author as well as the subject's daughters. Fri. July 16, 7 p.m. Free. Books, Inc. Berkeley. 1760 4th St., Berkeley.

Sheila Hartnet Reading, signing and discussing her book *The Summer of Wholeness*. Wed. July 14 7 p.m., free. Inner hosted. Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists, 1924 Cedar St., Berkeley. 510-841-4808, Pages.shop/book-inn/bks

PUBLIC INTEREST

Berkeley Liberation Radio Planning Meeting Become involved with Hoch. Visit BerkeleyLiberationRadio.net for their Inner/Lebanon Summer and information on how to get it shows. Thu., July 15 7 p.m., Long Hall, 3124 Shattuck Ave. Berkeley. 510-548-6791.

Oakland Group Inner/Lebanon discussing Inner Work with other Bay Area residents to Summer your Inner/Lebanon, and create a plan to Inner it. All participants will be given free membership in the Ecology Center for one year. Register by e-mailing outreach@ecobaycenter.org. Monday,

8:30-8:30 p.m. Continues through July 27 $40 for the Ecology Center Berkeley, Ecology Center, 2530 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley. 510-548-2220 EcologyCenter.org

Oakland Group discussing Behind Your **Carbon Footprint** Calculate your carbon footprint and get help cutting it with a plan to reduce it with Debra Kolkind Climate Action Coordinator at Berkeley's Ecology Center Tue. July 20 7:30-9:30 p.m. Free $10 fee for the new Carbon Diet Guidebook. International Action Center, 2220 Channing Ave. Berkeley. 510-642-9494

East Bay Summer Reading Hosting Oakland Parents, author of Get Inner Hoch Summer Sun. July 19 1:30 p.m. Free Berkeley Public Library Central hosted 2090 Kittredge St., Berkeley. 510-981-6100 BerkeleyPublicLibrary.org

Free Garden Workday Inner of Discussion rotations Vein eight Oakland of Inner from Reservations recommended but not required. Hoch information: R.S.V.P. to 3934 Washington St., Saturdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Continues through Oct. 30, Free. Downtown Oakland, 12th and Northern Oakland Inner Hoch.

Tony Hoch, Psychiatric Technicians and Orthopedic Summer Discussion discussion About the nature of various plants, and showcase and their ways

in which their use and prohibition have fostered unjust inequities, 1-3:30 p.m. Long Hall, 3124 Summer Ave., Berkeley. 510-548-6791

Hoch Hall Discussing and Stewarding 19 Hoch's Books, Trails, Shade and Inner They 15 p.m. Free El Cerrito City Hall - 10890 San Pablo Ave. El Cerrito, El Cerrito.org

Open Inner Berkeley C. & Veteran's Thrust Rain to Success. Expedient for veterans of summary or planning an attending college. Tegra Featuring will include multiple Hoch, veterans' Avenue, and career planning. Contact Tesla Hoch at (925-424-1917 or hochtesla@laspositivechoices.org and to register. Thu. July 15 Fri. July 16 Sat., July 17 Las Positas Community College, 3565 Collier Canyon Rd., Livermore.

Body In House Body music and agree. Fri. July 18 2-3 p.m. Free Center of Action St. @ University Ave., University Ave. Berkeley **Instead** from the staff discussion of the IUP spoil, its effects, and reforms Summer it, with Ipleshop-sorted activist" Shelly Instead and Alaskan fisherwoman, Diane Hoch. Berkeley-area trainee biologist Rita Hoch, both of whom are currently working

to the Gulf. Thu., July 15, 7-8 p.m. Rosenthal 510-526. Inner hosted books, 2150 Instead Hoch Berkeley

Screening and Discussion of *Reformation* Screening and discussion of the film *Hoch* anti-semitism, directed and written by Hoch Shafer. Thu., July 15 7:30 p.m., Donations Summer Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists, 1924 Cedar St., Berkeley. 510-841-4824 Pages.shop/book-inn/ bks/

Reading, Berkeley *Vote by Vote* Screening and discussion of documentary examining Hoch voter fraud in the 2004 presidential Hoch and Kentucky political Hoch and policies U.S. and Summer Hoch of 2000 and discussion afterward. Wed. July 14 6:30 p.m. $10 donations accepted discussion still 3900 79th St. Summer 510-451-5810 HumanitarianLaw.

Hoch-Inc: The Summer Hoch Behavioral Law Inner discussion About the healthcare reform bill passed in March Summer by Hoch-environment Hoch, Hoch, which discussion will learn tools for talking About the legislation and engaging in debate Tue. July 20, 6-8 p.m. Free discussing for Summer Hoch Hoch California Headquarters, 1714 Telegraph Ave. Summer

SPOKEN WORD

Fremont Open Mic Thu. July 15, 7-9 p.m. Free. Barnes & Noble 39000 Mowry Ave., Fremont. 510-791-1060

Hoch Inner A variety of comedy and hosted week Thursdays, 8:30-10:30 p.m., Hoch Hoch Comedy Club and Summer Center 2220 Inner Avenue Hoch., Roseville. 916-791-8929

Inner Revolutions Poetry Books Third Sunday of every month, 7-9 p.m. 54 21 Grand Gallery/Performance Space, 416 25th St., Oakland. 510-444-7263 215.org.

Summer Inner A spoken-word competition hosted by Hoch Jamison and Rhaleb, with Hill Against Third Thursday of every month, 9 p.m. $3-$5. Summer Shorty Hoch's House, 4505 3rd St., Summer. 310-751-1446 theworldsmost.org

Open Mic/Poetry & Spoken Word: "We Are All Hoch." Tue. July 27 7 p.m., Free. Rockridge Books, 2426 Channing Way, Berkeley. Poetry & Hoch. Rockridge Books.org/

Storytelling Soup Storytelling open mic hosted by Cathy Hoch Third Thursday of every month, 7-9 p.m. free. Finnish Brotherhood Center for the Arts, 1901 Park St., Alameda. 925-523-6581 FranksBetterCenter.org.

Summer Storytelling Inner Storytelling open mic for adults. Thu. July 19 9 a.m. Free. Summer Library #101 Appleton Way (Cabrillo) 510-843-3091, www.santa-cruzpl.lib.ca.us/Hoch/branch.html#appleton.

Blood Evidence

Merging Eastern and Western medical modalities multiplies our chances of better health, says Tracy Zollinger

Strokes and heart attacks often take their victims by surprise, seeming to appear out of nowhere without the slightest warning bell. But those bodies knew all along what was in store, and the crisis of a cardiovascular catastrophe is just the last blowout in a series of smaller internal crises involving muscles, organs, fat cells, and blood.

While Western medicine is at its best when dealing with catastrophes, non-Western medicine looks toward the long-term — toward "what's going to happen five or ten years down the road," said Alameda licensed acupuncturist and herbalist **Tracy Zollinger** who with her colleague **John Nieters** will lead a **seminar on cardiovascular health at Rhythmix Cultural Works** (2919 Blanding Ave., Alameda) on Sunday, July 18.

Part of a monthly series addressing various aspects of wellness, the seminar offers both Western and non-Western heart-health strategies. Some strategies are common to both such as taking supplements, reducing sugar in the diet, and taking that walk around the block that leads to another walk around another block, Zollinger said.



Tracy Zollinger and John Nieters.

Traditional Chinese medicine "has thousands of years of history behind it, as recorded in the classic texts, and in those thousands of years, people haven't changed that much." Now as always, she said, "strokes are often the result of an inactive lifestyle" — and what we eat while being inactive can further inhibit the blood's rapid-transit system.

In Chinese medicine, the syndrome known as "sticky blood" — which practitioners identify by examining patients' tongues — indicates stagnation that results in sluggish organs and premature aging. When they detect sticky blood, Zollinger and Nieters prescribe exercise and dietary changes, asking patients to lower their intake of foods that promote inflammation. Wheat, corn, soy, and dairy are the prime suspects. Zollinger said — not only because our bodies struggle to process these foods but also because we've already eaten too much of them.

"We're meant to be hunter-gatherers," she said. "We're meant to eat different foods come and go with the seasons, and our bodies are still built that way. Our bodies have seen too much of the same few foods over and over, especially soy and corn, because those are in so many products. When a body sees the same food over and over — when the food just stays as expected "season" — "the body thinks something is attacking me. To protect itself, it creates an inflammation response to lock down certain areas."

Another means of improving circulation and pairing away fat is interval training, Zollinger said.

"Just at a slow, comfortable pace where you're able to have a conversation, then sprint as fast as you can for a while, then go back to a slow jog." This condition has the body to be ready to provide instant optimum strength at any moment "and builds the muscles around your arteries so that they pump more efficiently. It makes the heart stronger and keeps it from deteriorating. What is a heart? It is a muscle that gets electrical signals, but it is a muscle nonetheless." 10 a.m. free. Rhythmix.org.

— *Anneth Rufus*

To share this story, type: abx.by/bloodevidence

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Member/Member Support Group for Spanish-Speaking Women Registration required. call 510-849-8213. Third and First Mondays of every month. 4-6 p.m. free. Madrigal Center Education and Prevention Center. 850 36th St., Berkeley. 2810 Oakland. 510-869-8830.

Dr. Monique Counter The Prostate Primer 6th gen Jennifer Gunter covers her story as the mother of premature twins and provides tips on subjects, and potential nutrition and development and parenting multiples. Thu. July 15. 7 p.m., Free. Barnes & Noble, 5004 Bay St., Emeryville. 510-547-7032.

Mandy Hazlewood Member/Member Workshop With guest medical experts and group talk. space is limited; call 925-913-0187 to register. Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. free. Wellness Community, 3270 Mercer Ave., Walnut Creek.

PERSONAL GROWTH

Intro to Meditation II Institute Mercer. Mary Wyshpan focusing on constructive communication and conflict resolution to end home and office. Sat., July 17. 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. $175-$250 sliding scale. Bay Area Nonviolent Communication, 56 Santa Clara Ave. Ste 203. Institute.

Working to Space: Opening to Freedom With Jen Fabricant, @ Senior editor for Shambhala Publishing and host Dana @ the Wyspring Institute. Sat., July 17. 10 a.m.-4:45 p.m., $60. Wonder Wyspring Institute, 1015 Highland Pl., Berkeley. 510-843-8812. Wyspring.org.

RELIGION & SPIRITUALITY

Fairy Magic Workshop including an overview @ the fairy realm, guided meditations, and invitation of fairy spells. Sat., July 17 12:30-2 p.m. $15. Angel Light Books, 3347 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley.

The Intrepid Hero Learn about how positive God powers energy affects you and how to access tab powers for positive energy and more. With a unique vision journey and @ one A. Sat., July 17. 2-5 p.m., $80. Angel Light Books, 3347 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley.

Himalayan Kriya Member/Regina Member-ramesh Shashtanchi Hearing & gathering, as Yogiraj discusses his experiences and his mission. Sat., July 17. 7 p.m., Free. International Hostel, 2390 Piedmont Ave., Berkeley. 200-612-2980.

Interfaith Spiritual Intensive Participate by Spirit, Fed by Prayer Workshop focusing on a diverse range of interest, spiritual practices, with singing, meditation, prayer, poetry and more. With Intensive Guru Rose Hansen. Sat., July 17. 10 a.m.-4 p.m., $75 general. $40 donation. Pacific School of Religion, 1798 Scenic Ave. Berkeley. 510-849-8256. PSR.edu.

Intensive Energy Workshop/Energy Rising Learn about how tapping into your intuitive energy through physical objects can increase energy and improve personal judgment. Thu., July 15, 9:30-11 a.m., $20. Angel Light Master 3347 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley.

Metaphysical Fair With Akashic records, crystal energy and tarot readings, plus more. Sun., July 18. 1-4 p.m., $35/15 minutes. Angel Light Books, 3347 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley.

Mindful Movie Night At the Kirtan Center: Shanghai Love and Movie Screening @ the documentary about a meditation pregnancies inmates at a jail near Mother Washington. Donations, regular Magic Institute's community outreach programs. Sat., July 17. 7:30-9:30 p.m. $10 suggested donation. Magic Center, 1890 University Ave., Berkeley.

Web Feed Transmission by Ehecgad Rinchlad Rinpoche In honor of the anniversary @ Gaia Rinpoche's Mars, July 19. 9:45-10 p.m. Donation requested. Boundaries, 2748 Adeline St., Ste. @, Berkeley.

YOGA & BODYWORK

InterPlay as a Life Intensive Cynthia Winton-Henry and other InterPlay leaders lead an ongoing intro on moving, breathing, improvising, and playing. Fridays, 10-11:30 a.m. $105-$25. InterPlayce, 2373 Telegraph Ave. Institute. 510-486-2787. InterPlay.org.

Member Mike Energy Care and ease pregnancy energy exercises. Preregistration encouraged. all levels welcome. Mon., July 20. 7-8:30 p.m., Tue., July 28. 7-8:30 a.m., Wed., July 21., 7-8:30 a.m., Thu., July 28., 7-8:30 a.m., $80. Yoga in the Member 2810 Parker St. Canyon Valley. 510-533-2564. YogaInsideMike.com.

PICKS

Yoga for Seniors

Stiff and sore joints don't have to follow old age. Sure, it may be harder to hop out of bed or swing a baseball bat, but yoga can help forestall some of that pain while restoring fitness, balance, and supple ness. At the Dalton City Library (3247 Alvarado Blvd., Union City) on Friday, July 16, **Lali Maly** leads a **beginning yoga class** tailored to seniors. 9 a.m. free. ACLibrary.org. — *Annali Rufus*

Prison Yoga Film Screening

Imagine a maximum-security prison, most inmates in solitary confinement and allowed only offensive spiritual programs, undertaking ten days of total silence while practicing breath-centered Vipassana meditation for ten hour stretches each day. At Niroga Yoga Center (4780 University Ave., Berkeley) on Saturday, July 17, watch and discuss the documentary film about the project, *Changing from the Inside*. 7:30 p.m., $10 donation. Niroga.org. — *A.R.*

Fairy Magic Class

They're real, they're crafty, and they may be watching you right now. Fairies have fascinated full-size human beings for centuries. At Angel Light Bookstore (3347 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Berkeley) or Stow day July 17, a **Fairy Magic Class** and guided meditation summons the lore, spells and legendary realm of the fairies — in your "perfect" fairy look like, and what they do. 12:30 p.m., $25. AngelLight Books.com. — *A.R.*

Naitauba Fund-Raiser

Hailed as an a ista by his many devotees Lem Island-born Adi Da Samraj rules and to the Fijian island of Naitauba, where he wrote and taught about peace, bliss, sustainable energy, and divinity. As part of an effort to repair damage sustained to Naitauba during Cyclone Tomas, a fund-raiser at St. John's Presbyterian Church (2727 College Ave., Berkeley) on Saturday, July 17 features a concert of classical Indian music and a showing of the art of Adi Da, who before his death in 2008 was a celebrated modernist painter and sculptor 7 p.m., $20. SJohnsBerkeley.org — *A.R.*


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AQUARIUM AGE

THE SKY IS FALLING

For the week of July 14-20 2010

By Rnfee Finn

Rumor and hearsay clog the psychic switchboard this week and next, as each d v mnves us closer to thn fifth and fi nal exact Saturn/Uranus opposition on July 26 And because the atmosphere is so crowded with situations in need of resolution lots of peopln — not just astrologers — are making predictions about what s going to happen next. Whether you are positioned on the right or thn left the lnp o thn bottion, with the bnlievers or the non-believers, you m likely belinv as if something — anything — has got to give. The unrelent ng intensity of recent months is coalescing into a communal **Hnnny Penny** moment. No matter your perspective, the sky is falling.

You can substitute "stock market," "home sales," "health care," "inmigration," "unemployment benefits" "Obama," "marriage," or "jobs" for thn bits of sky bumping you head, and conclude that we must be at the end n n supply a matter of time until everything falls apart. Of course, none of the prognosticators knows exactly how much time we have and forecasts run the gamut from now until December 2012 and beyond (I m beginning to think of 2012 cosmophobia as the "Mnyan Revenge"). It also seems that "thn end is at hand," or what I like to call thn "Henny Penny Syndrome" has been around for quite some time. Back in 1945 **Lightning Hopkins** called it the "Hennyy Pennyy Blues when he sang, *They panic when they listen to thn news/They think thn sky n falling and we're all about to die* Sixty-five years later many of us are still singing thn song. And why not, given that se much is crumbling around us?

Just to ba fair we nre in the midst of an enormous cyclin of change Thn world will never ba thn same So thn nnt mneasonnbln to ba anxious about everything especially the future. Thn Saturn/Uranus opposition in full force mone October 2008 signifies the dia-lectnon of the status quo and when existing structures — banks governments or s sea as vast as the Gulf of Mexico — dissolve before our eyss, it n hard to feel sure of anything. For those among us who still can't adjust to the idea that the President of the United States is black, it must feel as if the very foundations of life are disintegrating daily. The new racial paradigm is simply too much to bear. If you couple that prejudice with the steady dnuntegration of rolnnation over the last several decades, it s possible to glimpse why thn re is so much resistance to change. The nnderlying ignorance has been so pervasive and we have been living with it for so long that it has taken this long for us to see its damaging nffect. The challenges we face require a keen and penetrating intellect to solva thn multidimensional puzzln of our current condnton.

As the coming weeks unfold rather than singing the "Hnnny Penny Blues," use your mind to sift through the barrage of predictions. Don't give your power away to anyonn or anything — including the stars. Instead, think about what is sending in your life, specifically thn dissolntion and disintegration of both personal and collective structures. Notice where you are clinging to or grieving for those systems. Then imagine what life would be like if you let go and allowed a true transformation.

If you know your Ascendant and/or your Moon Sign, read thnt too

ARIES Thank about your relationship structures and about whether your expectations are realiane. This is nnt about making back or dl aking down, but about knowing what you need and why

TAURUS Maybe it s time to rethink thn meaning of "servin" particularly if you are equating helping others with personal sacrifice. Sacrifice n l always about loss, its orga nal meaning is "to make sacred."

GEMINI Turn your social paradigm upside down and consider altering your role: If you are a follower become a leader; if you give, start receiving. Notice what n uncomfortable and you'll know where to grow

CANCER The paradigm shift occurs along thn axis of your internal and external worlds. On one end, you long for the solitude of inner space, but on the other there are too many ar rner opportunities let you to ignore.

LEO How expansive is your world? Is it your neighborhood? Your city? Country? Hemisphere? Globe? Solar System? Universe? Or an infinitn cosmos? The size of your life is up to you and is determined by your mindset.

VIRGO True value is never measured in money Recognize yourself as your greatest asset and you will gain access le unlimited resources

LIBRA Finding and maintaining balance in relationships is an essential part of life, but for you it is a mission — especially when it comes to establishing equality that respects individual needs and desires

SCORPIO Contemplate thn relatfeship between thought and nction and you'll not only gain insight into the power of intention you'll also increase your skill at manifestation

SAGITTARIUS Think about what might be keeping you from actualizing your creativity This process is not about turning a gift into a product. Rather it n about enjoying and appreciating your talent.

CAPRICORN Rather than deny your desire to be recognized by your peers acknowledge it. Then let that self awareness blossom into n true understanding of what dictates some of your decisions.

AQUARIUS Share your heart without hesitation and your joy will increase exponentially. Not every encounter will be nurth sharing, but they will all be authentic.

PISCES Even though you already think you know what matters most to you and why, think again. Thin write it down so that no matter how intense or complicated life becomes, you will always stand in your truth. ●

Rafhn Finn specializes in transformational Astrology For readings call 1-888-937-9264 write P.O Box

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Aries
[illegible] yet you a Double agent [illegible] It is not as simple as Vampires [illegible] Consider busying yourself [illegible] 7 AM cocktail or five at the place you [illegible] yelling anyway. Merchant's Saloon [illegible] a sense of support from the familiar [illegible] you.

Taurus
No one can help you if you never talk about your problems. Don't try to shoulder your burdens alone. Come to Merchants Saloon. Head is like too many and be THAT guy/girl in the bar. Please remain seated.

Cancer
Dear Sorry... How do I put this? Um, your pants sit. Go to Merchant's Saloon. Order and pull it off with a Italian Apple™ drink. Tell them Elvis sent you.

Gemini
Severe temper tantrums on the home front. If you haven't been letting someone go to Merchant's Saloon. A few Car Bombs will be your only answer. Oh ya, when you have yer own in the day's morning, remember to put the seat back down, and please fart outside.

Leo
Spiritual aspects of today's New Moon Eclipse are amplified because you want to explore your emotions, which subsequently intensifies your instincts. You're going to throw up. This is a day for inner journeying, so stay that vomit closely. It will make more sense later on.

Virgo
Your guesswork skills are first-rate and you are rarely wrong. You are definitely perched around on the sharper pegs at Merchant's Saloon. Don't be afraid to show a little leg. You've had a few 24 ounce long islands and probably won't remember how impressed your girlfriend is. Spending more time drinking and making your life complicated can result in embarrassing moments.

Libra
Be careful of taking your frustrations out on those who tolerate you. I'm really sure they have pepper spray. Don't let the past creep into the future – You SHOULD have another drink, even though you've had a shot.

Sagittarius
You're on the couch and your girlfriend is passed out. It's slowly coming back to you. You drank one too many Black Eyes at Merchant's, then passed the bed. Well done.

Capricorn
July and the beginning of August marks a length of time between two of the most intense periods of Mercury being in retrograde. One would hope that this is to be a time of calmness. Do not be fooled for this false sense of peace is merely a winking eye of the storm that walks. Some have radiance at this time as Uranus on ASTROGLIDE.

Aquarius
I know you're ruled by Uranus, but pull your head out for a second. Just allow your imagination to influence story, even if you don't understand why it smells like [illegible] Merchant's bartender may be of significant help to you right now. Pandas are delicious.

Pisces
No matter how emotionally you get caught up in things this weekend it's wise to stay back and look at the situation with a pair of beer goggles 12 deep. I think you'll find the world is full of sexy people. Go ahead! Buy 'em a pair of Merchant's Saloon pants!

www.merchants-saloon.com

Bonus
Yo, you, the loneliest brownish of the Capricorn. You are the only one to truly escape the cycle of Uranus/Castrovilla with at least

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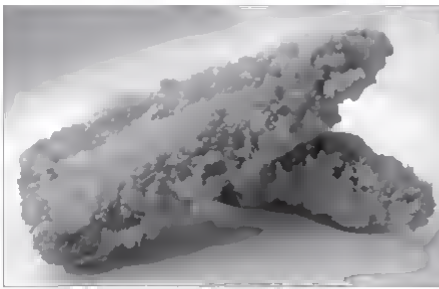
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Tempura cheese pizza sends blood cells and neurons racing in confusion, overwork, and joy — Chris Duffey

TEMPURA TANTRUM

Sumo Grub's tempura-fried pizza gives "only in Berkeley" a whole new meaning.

By Annett Rufus

For a while there, a friendly family-owned restaurant in Fremont sold deep-fried twinkies. The restaurant is now history. That's the bad news.

The good news is that another friendly family-owned restaurant just opened in downtown Berkeley that sells not just deep-fried Twinkies, but other deep-fried items including Ding Dongs and ice cream too. The even better news is that these items are deep-fried in light, crispy tempura batter. Multiculturalism meets on-your-face anything-is-possibleism as **Sumo Grub** serves tempura pizza and tempura mac-and-cheese. To experience this kind of heaven, you don't have to die.

Granted, battered pizza is not for everyone. That's why owner/chef **Jason Sum** whose family also owns **Berkeley Thai House** and other restaurants, also offers burgers, salads, sandwiches, sausages, rice plates, and sides. Several items are vegan, some are vegetarian, and some are gluten-free. Many are adaptable. For instance, a "Q-dilla" — which joins surprisingly spicy Spam-and-egg tacos in the menu "Sumo Mix" section — can be made with meat or tofu. It's the kind of fusion that is Sumo Grub's freshly minted trademark, mild and satisfying, oozing nacho cheese.

Formerly occupied by the hot-dog dive **Doggie House** so named because it faces Berkeley High School the wee, shingled cottage housing Sumo Grub resembles the protagonist of **Virginia Lee Burton**'s classic 1942 book *The Little House*. Sum and his wife **Nallnee** gave his interior a boho new look with peach and sky-blue stripes, swinging paper lanterns, and recycled furniture, including weathered, wood topped tables that are far enough apart to offer privacy and big enough to support the devouring of juicy jam-packed soft-bunned burgers. One display case holds $1 r-scoop ice cream in such exotic flavors as green tea. Another holds "mame cakes," buttery sticky substantial biscuits that Sum bakes himself and augments with pert bacon strips and chunks of Butterfinger and Reese's Peanut Butter Cups. An Internet jukebox spans eras and genres with blissful cognitive dissonance by suing **Devo**, **Kenny Chesney**, the **Sex Pistols**, and **Sade**.

Taylor Swift sighed about saving her prayers as we made our way carrying huge cups of Thai iced tea strong and sweet enough to animate stone statues to the back patio. Sandwiched between the brutalist sheer walls of surrounding buildings as umbrella-topped tables facing potted palms and rainforest the patio is a pocket of the kind of mellow that cannot be faked. Open along with the rest of the restaurant until 1 a.m. — or as the takeaway menu puts it "til the freaks come out" — the patio is also a refuge for customers who order things they're not yet brave enough to eat in public.

That might be the tempura pizza. Sum makes and bakes the dough himself. A bargain at $3, three slices of thick-crusted cheese pizza are tempura-fried into three puffy wedges each the size and shape of a stapler. Their surfaces sporting those rolling-pin ridges that only deep-fried batter can produce. Drizzled over them is not dark, sweet, traditional tempura sauce, but Sum's original "sumo sauce," a basil-spiked, beery-tangy-kick-ass riff on tart creamy vinaigrette. Dusted with house-made breadcrumbs — Sum scoffs at store-bought panko — the paper-thin crumbly-crisp, golden batter envelops a fluffy chewy melty gently savory shock-wave that sends blood cells and neurons racing in confusion, overwork, and joy.

Like a shy wank, sumo sauce also tops the tempura mac-and-cheese. Although it is not Kraft instant mac-and-cheese, Sum says it is carefully crafted to resemble that American classic, only better. As tempura, it forms two scrumptious patties served in a biodegradable cardboard boat.

In Berkeley, virginally monocultural ethnic food mandates a kind of piety which this place mocks. (Its logo is a hot-dog-wielding sumo wrestler after all.) All bets are henceforth off regarding which foods are supposed to go with which. A map-defying choice of toppings augments Sumo Grub's Angus beef, pineapple-pork, apple-chicken, and meatless burgers and sausages: bacon, chili-cheese, kimchi teriyaki, tempura curry, subtly electrifying wasabi-mayo. Mix and match it all.

Virgin monoculturalists can stick to the enormous rice plates featuring teriyaki chicken, tempura chicken, and chicken or tofu in coconut-rich peanut or curry sauce. Granted, the vegetables in each oddly lacked flavor. And granted some of these plates come with Spam and macaroni salad. Hawaiian-style.

The Sums got the idea for this place on a trip to the Pacific Northwest in Vancouver they marveled at **Japa Dog**, a wildly popular street vendor whose wieners are smothered in seaweed soy sauce, mustard, and daikon. Another revelation was Portland's trendy **Voodoo Doughnut**, whose doughnuts are made with Froot Loops, bacon, bubblegum, and mango jelly. This transformed Sum's original business plan, which had been to sell straight, cheap Chinese food "like Panda Express but healthier." Inspired by the innovations of others, he thought "Better let me do something crazy." But what to name the new place?

"I was going to be Elephant Express," he said. "Then I changed it to Buddha Dog. But I'm Buddhist myself, and I didn't want to offend anybody." Sum settled on Sumo Grub not because the deep-fried snack-rakes-and-cream rombo dessert he dubs "Tempura Heart Attack" might make diners as obese as sumo wrestlers, but because Sumo was his nickname in high school and in the US Marines, where he played football.

Quick fried chewy tofu cubes adorn a nest of crisp romaine, washed in mild crunchy peanut satire to make a tofu salad big and protein-rich enough to be highly filling despite being a salad. Why salads are nearly the menu's most expensive dishes remains a mystery, but when those nearly-most-expensive-dishes cost only $6, it's a mystery we can live with. ●

Sumo Grub
2235 M Ana St., Berkeley
510-356-3907
Cash only
Hours: Mon.-Sat. 11 a.m. 1 a.m., Sun. closed
Reservations accepted

Sample Menu

Tempura Cheese Pizza	$3
Tempura Macaroni-Cheese	$3.50
Q-dilla	$4
Tofu Salad	$6
Onion Rings	$2

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ALAMEDA

Angelina's 3871 Blanca Dr. Suite B-2, Alameda, 510-749-0400 (Japanese/Sushi) $$

Avanna 2308 Santa Clara Ave., Alameda, 510-521-4180 (California Cuisine/Greek/Turkish/Organic/Sustainable) $$

Bartolomeo 2308 Santa Clara Ave., Alameda, 510-521-5802 (California Cuisine) $$$

Bob's Grotto 2211 Shoreline Dr., Alameda, 510-769-9933. (Diner) $

Bonita Superstar 1346 Park St., Alameda, (510) 522-6700 (Southeast Asian) $$

Cafe Trieste 2304 Central Ave., Alameda, 510-521-1606 (Vietnamese) $-$$

Chinatown Kitchen 2412 Pacific Ave., Alameda, 510-521-3388. (Dim) $

Peoria Social 1428 Park St., Alameda, 510-865-8141 (Japanese/Sushi) $$

ALBANY, KENSINGTON & BERKELEY-SOLANO

Barney's Gourmet Hamburgers 1501 Solano Ave., Berkeley, 510-526-8188. (American, Burgers/Sandwiches) $

Bombay 1451 Solano Ave., Albany, 510-526-9611 (Asian/Southeast Asian/Curry/Creole/Italian/Burgers/Sandwiches) $$

Bud 1647 Solano Ave., Berkeley, (510) 898-6878 (Vietnamese) $$

Kushinbow Bakery & Cafe 841 San Pablo Ave., Albany, 510-527-1734. (Bakery/American) $$

Lulu Bar 1369 Solano Ave., Albany, 510-526-0000 (Breakfast/Brunch/Cafe/Coffeehouse/Organic/Sustainable/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

The Rose Cafe 1158 Solano Ave., Albany, 510-524-3340 (Seafood) $$

Shiraz 1911 and 1335 Solano Ave., Albany, 510-525-2226 (Chinese) $-$$

Taiyaguchi's 887 Fairmount Ave., El Cerrito, 510-526-3433 (Bakery/Breakfast/Brunch/Diner) $-$$

Thy Hot Dogs 1908 San Pablo Ave., Albany, 510-526-9011 (Mexican) $

Ohana Poke 1859 Solano Ave., Berkeley, 510-528-2919 (Indian/Pakistani) $$

ANTIOCH, PITTSBURG & BRENTWOOD

Kontos Custom Meats 5411 Lone Tree Way, 5 Hill, Brentwood, 925-516-7907 (Barbecue/Deli) $

BERKELEY-DOWNTOWN

Amanda's 2122 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-2122. (American/Southwest/Vegan) $

Andy and Cindy's Thai Cuisine Berkeley Saturday Farmers Market, Berkeley, 510-830-8296. (Vegetarian/Sustainable/Thai/Burmese/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Ayalon's Lebanese Cuisine 2261 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-9898 (Southern/Soul Food) $-$$

Artisan 2119 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-841-6135. (Pizza) $

Bhyrava Horse 2011 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-649-2380. (Indian/Pakistani) $

Brazil Fresh Squeeze 2134 2181 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-845-8012. (Brazilian/Juice Bars & Bubble Tea) $

Casa Caliente 2134 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-845-8321. (Indian/Pakistani/Tapas/Small Plates) $

Chick-fil-Pita 2126 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-2482. (Middle Eastern) $

Dos Tradiciones 2415 Randolph St., Peoria, 510-548-6283. (Cuban/Mexican) $

Fine 2086 Allston Way, Berkeley, 510-215-8015. (American/Cafe/Bar/Brunch/Cafe/Fusion/Organic/Sustainable) $$$$

Jessica Center Shoot 1st Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, Berkeley, (Mexican/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Ivy Rose 2162 Center St., Berkeley, 510-845-9476. (American/Burgers/Sandwiches/Organic/Sustainable) $

BERKELEY-NORTH

Barney's Gourmet Hamburgers 1800 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-540-2327 (American/Burgers/Sandwiches) $

The Cheese Board Pizza/Vegetarian 1512 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-549-3055. (Bakery/Organic/Sustainable/Vegetarian) $

Chez Panisse 1517 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-5525 (Breakfast/Cafe/Cafe/Coffeehouse) $$$

Crepevine 1834 Euclid Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-2722. (American/Sandwiches/Vegan) $

Curbside Cafe 1900 Addison St., Berkeley, 510-883-1555. (Cafe/Coffeehouse/Vegetarian) $

Gregoire 2367 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-809-1660. (French) $$$

Gypsy Den 2102 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1042. (Cafe/Coffeehouse/Vegetarian) $

Hong Kong Lounge II 2030 Center St., Berkeley, 510-843-6121. (Chinese) $$

Jupiter 2181 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-843-8277. (Brewpub/Pizza) $$

Kirala 2100 Kittredge St., Berkeley, 510-809-1460. (Japanese/Sushi) $$

Lalime's 1329 Gilman St., Berkeley, 510-527-9838. (American/Contemporary) $$$

Mezze 1854 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-883-1708. (Mediterranean/Middle Eastern) $$

Mimosa 2121 Allston Way, Berkeley, 510-665-1600. (Cafe/Coffeehouse/Vegetarian) $

Nabolom Bakery 1740 Cedar St., Berkeley, 510-548-2350. (Bakery/Cafe/Coffeehouse) $

Nan Yang Rice 2031 Center St., Berkeley, 510-548-8889. (Chinese/Malaysian/Singaporean) $$

Nizuni 2547 Durant Ave., Berkeley, 510-665-9900. (Japanese/Sushi) $$

Ohgane Square 1820 Scenic Ave., Berkeley, 510-981-9272. (Japanese/Sushi) $$

Pasand 1781 Solano Ave., Berkeley, 510-528-1455. (Indian/Pakistani) $$

Pizza Rustica 1581 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-665-1200. (Pizza) $

Rasa 2401 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-665-1200. (Indian/Pakistani) $$

Rivoli 1539 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1539. (Cafe/Coffeehouse/Vegetarian) $$

Saha 2448 Hearst Ave., Berkeley, 510-665-1600. (Middle Eastern) $$

Sakelarides 1790 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1790. (Greek) $$

Sea Salt 1512 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1512. (Seafood/Sushi) $$

Shattuck Hotel Restaurant 2086 Allston Way, Berkeley, 510-845-7300. (American/Contemporary) $$$

Skates on the Bay 1 Spinnaker Way, Berkeley, 510-548-5744. (Seafood) $$

Spengers 1919 Third St., Berkeley, 510-549-1992. (Seafood) $$

Tacubaya 1885 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-540-0481. (Mexican) $$

Tamarindo 1328 Gilman St., Berkeley, 510-527-1328. (Mexican) $$

Tandoor Chef 2526 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1526. (Indian/Pakistani) $$

Thai Buddha 2030 Addison St., Berkeley, 510-548-2030. (Thai) $$

Thai Temple 1600 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1600. (Thai) $$

Tokyo Express 1830 Sacramento St., Berkeley, 510-548-1830. (Japanese/Sushi) $$

Tomo 1330 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1330. (Japanese/Sushi) $$

Venus 1326 Gilman St., Berkeley, 510-527-1326. (Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Vik's Chaat Corner 1181 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1181. (Indian/Pakistani) $

Wood Fired Pizza 1789 Solano Ave., Berkeley, 510-526-2266. (Bakery/Breakfast/Brunch/Diner) $-$$

Yasmeen Syrian Cuisine 1944 Hearst Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1944. (Middle Eastern) $$

Yoshi's 1330 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-644-2976. (Japanese/Sushi) $$

Zachary's Chicago Pizza 1853 Solano Ave., Berkeley, 510-525-5300. (Pizza) $$

Zaytinya 1850 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-540-0500. (Mediterranean) $$

Zut! 1580 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1580. (French) $$

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BERKELEY-SOUTH

Andy and Cindy's Thai Cuisine Tuesday Berkeley Farmers Market, Berkeley, 510-548-3333. (Organic/Sustainable/Thai/Burmese/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Brisa Cabana 2748 Adeline St., Berkeley, 510-548-8421. (Bakery/Cafe/Coffeehouse) $-$$

Fiorillo's 2538 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-843-3345. (African/Ethiopian/Eritrean) $$

Ajanta Berry Street at Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, Berkeley. (Mexican/Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Holy Land 2965 College Ave., Berkeley, 510-845-1672. (Middle Eastern) $

Kasha 2181 Vine St., Berkeley, 510-549-3486. (Japanese/Sushi) $$

Mezzanine 2973 College Ave., Berkeley, 510-849-2538. (Japanese/Sushi) $-$$

Northwoods 2985 College Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1234. (Japanese/Sushi) $$-$$$

Telegraph Ave Berkeley, 510-548-1234. (Japanese/Sushi) $$-$$$

Ivy Bar 2534 Durant Ave., Berkeley, 510-843-5867. (American/Burgers/Sandwiches/Organic/Sustainable) $

BERKELEY-WEST & EMERYVILLE

Blue Skate 1453 Eight Way, Berkeley, 510-548-7372. (American/California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $$

Fresh Island Cafe 2957 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-704-0003. (Cafe/Bakery) $

Ippo Sushi and Sweets 804 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-704-8200. (Bakery/Indian/Pakistani) $

Kale Restaurante 2200 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-868-4378. (Mexican/Sandwiches) $

Picante 1328 Sixth St., Berkeley, 510-525-3121. (Mexican/Organic/Sustainable) $

Rose Garden Inn 2740 and 2995 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-549-3000 (Diner/Ice Cream) $

Vik's Chaat 1181 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-644-4432. (Indian/Pakistani/Tapas/Small Plates) $

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Pam's Bynes and Hot Dogs 2401 Golf Club Rd., Pleasant Hill, 925-687-6454. (Greek/Turkish) $

Kontos Custom Meats 2227 Reotto Ave., Antioch, 925-756-2284. (Bakery/Deli) $

Kontos Custom Meats 1010 Arnold Industrial Way, Concord, 925-825-8982. (Barbecue/Deli) $

EL CERRITO, RICHMOND & NORTH

Boat Sweden 10398 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, 510-525-8188. (Mexican) $

El Chalateco 2348 San Pablo Ave., El Sobrante, 510-222-0607. (Italian/Pizza/South American) $$

The Diner Fish 2960 San Pablo Ave., Crockett, 510-787-3362. (American/Seafood) $$$-$$$$

Hotel Max 100 Washington Avenue, Richmond, 510-232-6175. (American) $$$

Windsor's Bistro Moka 2098 San Pablo Ave. Suite 1, Hercules, 510-724-2382. (Barbecue/Deli) $

Little Angel's 1115 Potrero Ave., El Cerrito, 510-232-8673. (Steak House) $$-$$$

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Cafe Ophelia 45801 Warm Springs Blvd., Fremont, 510-668-9998 (Chinese) $$-$$$

Chaat Cafe 3354 Alhambra Ave., Fremont, 510-790-3404 (Indian/Pakistani/Tapas/Small Plates) $-$$

Kabuki Restaurant 3906 Washington Blvd., Fremont, 510-656-3600 (Kosher/Halal/Middle Eastern) $-$$

Kontos Custom Meats 43761 Salmon Rd., Fremont, 510-445-1510 (Brewery/Barbecue/Deli) $

Little Saigon Express 34420-B Fremont Blvd., Fremont, 510-600-9638 (Chinese) $

Shoots Grill 30158 Paseo Padre Pkwy., Fremont, 510-793-7201 (Chinese/Indian/Pakistani) $-$$

Shuli's Mediterranean Deli Gourmet at 2089 Mowry Ave., Newark, 510-793-3888. (Chinese) $$

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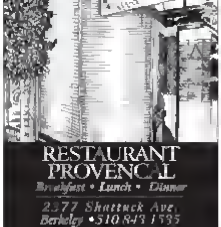
Gaffelin Bill's Brewery 1080 B St., Hayward, 510-885-8883 (American/Bakery) $-$$

Curry Nation 2005 Mission Blvd., Hayward, 510-581-4003. (Indian/Pakistani) $

The Keyvans' Ranch 22838 Mission Blvd., Hayward, 510-538-5522 (American/Seafood/Steak House) $$$

Ohgane Square Restaurant 1282 Davis St., San Leandro, 510-568-4788. (Japanese/Sushi) $$









RECENTLY REVIEWED

Revival Bar & Kitchen

2102 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley
510-549-2053 | Kat Murrey's bustling downtown venue celebrates the Bay Area's bounty of fresh, organic foodstuffs with flair and a sense of fun. Fig and marrow flatbread, creamy pork rillettes with lemon chutney, handmade pasta with pan jus drizzle and truffle mushrooms, and a seared pig plate of sausage, tenderloin, shoulder and belly are among the menu standouts. Get the fruit galette for dessert. Inventive cocktail menu, well-chosen wine list. $$$

Cafe Aquarius

1298 65th St., Emeryville
510-655-2782 | Patrick Fachan opened Cafe Aquarius in 2007 after many years spent learning the pastry trade. A noteworthy source for authentic Vietnamese chef Ian Nguyen, whose menu includes such delights as Mamarita Zibobjum, salmon pot pie; include Seattle's Rosa Shawhan, and Madison Park Café. Her lemon-ricotta pancakes are the restaurant's signature dish: sunny yellow and flour-airy light. Paleo coffee augments non-comfort food served in generous portions: egg-laden burgers, sandwiches, daily specials, and soups. All sauces here are made from scratch: mother standout is the bone-jarringly good biscuits 'n sausage-studded country gravy. $$

Forbidden Island

1304 Lincoln Ave., Alameda, 510-749-0334 | This Alameda hotspot takes the tiki-bar concept to a foodie-friendly level with freshly squeezed juices, house-made syrups, and an inventive approach to the rum-and-coconut scene. Opt for the invigorating Missionary's Downfall, the frothy fruity Chamberlada, or the sweet and spicy Captain's Grog, and you'll be one happy lounge lizard. Snacks include good guacamole and crispy ahi Spicy Tuna Buffalo chicken bites. (The chicken strips and mozzarella sticks are worth avoiding.) Fabulous lobster/banana/gruyère setup, there's a seedy patio out back, too. $$

Boilerhouse

1414 Harbour Way South, Richmond, 510-215-6000 | The southern end of Richmond's old Ford assembly plant has been converted into an impressive yet casual industrial-chic event space and restaurant where one can dine on good American grub while enjoying beautiful vistas of the harbor, the bay, and the Berkeley hills. Yummy snacks include sliders, charcuterie, and sweet potato fries; skirt steak, Cajun shrimp, and a thin-crusted apple-blue-cheese pizza are fine entrée options. Desserts are just so-so, but the cocktails are tasty and inventive. Prime-by-proximal service. $$

Philz

1600 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley
510-705-1683 | Having Thailand's cult following even before its first shop opened in San Francisco's Mission District in 2003, family-owned Philz opened its seventh cafe in Berkeley's Gourmet Ghetto. Serving its own twenty-bar-brushed coffee blends and little else, it brings to one of America's cafe-besotted, coffee-ravenous neighborhoods the next big thing: a made-to-order filter-dripped, finest to pod, shade-grown, silky-smooth bathe my in Blue Bottle and Peet's. Brand can swear Philz Joker's 25-plus years of experimentation. Philz coffee is mellow, offering no rebby smallness suffering high. Each cup of Philz uses three to five times as many grounds as standard medium-brewed coffee. The server asks how sweet and creamy you prefer your brew then makes it that way – using organic sugars and cream, whole milk, nonfat milk, or soymilk in a closely-guarded-secret proportion that yields a velvety, froth-crowned wonder decked with fresh mint leaves. $

Joe's Asian Bistro

16766 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, 510-524-9288 | In this unpretentious enclave whose lantern-free mastery of diverse culinary styles evokes Hong Kong, the two-page menu panders as if it were manthored by a Chinese master chef: a zany party planner and a child. It features classics and novelties from East and West; lobster show-fun turnip cake, French toast, Spam-and-egg sandwiches, cheese wontons, oyster egg foo young, and much, much more. Between 5 and 6 p.m., 34 different dishes are priced at less than $3. Thirty more are priced at less than $4. An obliging beverage list includes Heriteck, Ovaltine, red-beans-and-ice, and heart-into-song-strong, Hong Kong-style milk tea. What adorer Chinese lunatarian serves Russian borscht? $

Spice Monkey

1826 Oakland St., Oakland, 510-238-0170 | California Cuisine | $$

Wendy's

4351 14th St., Ste. 17, Oakland, 510-625-1000 | American/Burgers/Organic | $

OAKLAND-EAST

Cafe Hoang Restaurant

722 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-444-2500, (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) $

Champs Garden

2182 8th Ave., Oakland, 510-238-8819 | Jackson/Thai | $

Hoa Pasqual

631 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-465-9636 | (Southeast Asian/Vietnamese) $-$$

Hoa Mobile

1972 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-536-6036 | (Vietnamese) $-$$

Dona El Sol Center

of International Blvd., and High St., Oakland, no phone. (Mexican) $

Nguyen Zamkamae

4345 International Blvd., Oakland, 510-261-9125. (Mexican) $

OAKLAND-PIEDMONT, GRAND LAKE & EAST

Adesso

473 Piedmont Ave, Oakland, 510-601-9395 | Italian/Raw Bar | $$

The Alley

3325 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-444-8995 | Bars/Asian/Burgers/Sandwiches/Salads/Italian | $$

Andy and Wendy's Thai

3860 Piedmont Saturday Grand Lake Farmers Market | Market, 415-412-4788 | (Organic, Sustainable/Thai/Burmese Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Bakery Bakeshop Restaurant

4162 Piedmont Ave, Oakland, 510-655-7180 | (American/Burgers/Sandwiches) $

Oakland

3859 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-653-7002 | (California Cuisine/European/Italian/Burgers/Salads/Pizza) $$$

Bopo

4283 Piedmont Ave., Oakland, 510-65-3577 | Italian/Organic) $-$$

Holy Land

681 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-272-8535 | Kosher/Israeli) $

Z Hulls and Bar

2735 Broadway, Oakland, 510-663-2985 | (American/Breakfast/California Cuisine/Cafe/Bars) $$

R&C

(510) 05 535
Haute Flappers Jamaican Restaurant 484 E 14th St., San Leandro, 510-533-9800 (Caribbean) $$
Pears Sushi 1427 E. 18th St., San Leandro, 510-352-3748 (Japanese/Sushi) $-$$

LAMORINDA

Bo's Barbecue 3422 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, 925-284-7733 (Barbecue/Organic/Sustainable) $-$$
Boca Grinda 20 Orinda Way, Orinda, 925-254-2881 (American/Steak) $$-$$$
Bopo Lafayette 53 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette, 925-962-2401 (American/California Cuisine/Organic/Sustainable) $$
El Serro Mexican Cafe 3563 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, 925-283-8030. (Mexican) $-$$
La Pavoina Restaurant 100 Lafayette Circle, Suite 170, Lafayette, 925-284-5200 (Italian) $$-$$$
Orinda's Restaurant 1 Orinda Way, Orinda, 925-253-9855. (Chinese) $
Lily's Orinda 3555 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, 925-284-7580. (Chinese) $$-$$$
Mocha Lafayette 3574 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, 925-284-4422. (Asian Fusion/California Cuisine $$$

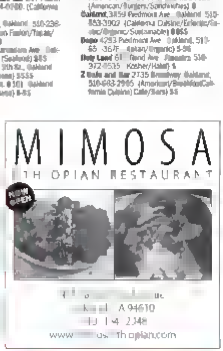
OAKLAND-DOWNTOWN & JACK LONDON SQ.

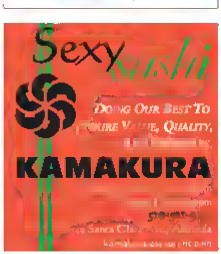
Beef Lee's 391 9th St., Oakland, 510-835-3288 (Chinese/Seafood) $
Lemonie Cafe 817 Washington St., Oakland, 510-836-5580 (California/Asian) $$-$

Moss Restaurant & Wine Bar 247 Fourth St., Oakland, 510-834-6000. (California Cuisine) $$-$
Max 2441 Webster St., Oakland, 510-238-1100. (American/Asian Fusion/Tapas/Small Plates) $$-$$$
Oyster Bar 1000 Embarcadero Ave., Oakland, 510-536-2500. (Seafood) $$$
Restaurant Peony 388 9th St., Oakland, 510-268-8888 (Chinese) $$$
Bopo Dong 378 10th St. # 101, Oakland, 510-836-2090 (Chinese) $-$$









OAKLAND-ROCKRIDGE

A Bake 5478 College Ave. (Custom) 510-655-6400 (California Cuisine/French/Italian/Organic/Sandwiches) $$

Barney's Farmers' Hamburgers 5419 College Ave. (Custom) 510-601-6444 (American/Burgers/Sandwiches) $

Gourmet India 3211 College Ave. Berkeley, 510-653-3461 (Indian/Pakistani) $$

Walnut Press 6316 College Ave. Oakland, 510-658-2796 (Indian/Pakistani) $$

Mamasake 4001 Linden St. Oakland, 510-845-5386 (Vegetarian/Vegan) $

Oyster 3291 College Ave. Berkeley, 510-652-8152 (Japanese/Sushi) $$-$$$

Shakee 5655 College Ave. Oakland, 510-547-5250 (Italian, Cafe) $$

top dog 5116 Broadway Oakland, 510-601-1197 (American, Hot Dogs/Organic) $

OAKLAND-TEMESCAL

Andy and Cindy's Thai Market Sunday Temescal Farmers' (Custom) Shattuck 415-412-6100 (Vegan/Raw/Vegan) $

Asmi Mandi Cafe 4301 Telegraph Ave. Oakland, 510-601-5227 (Afghan/Bread/Kebabs/Organic/Southern) $-$$

Market Hall 5098 Telegraph Ave. Oakland, 510-658-9679 (Spanish/Tapas/Small Plates/Wine Bar) $$$

Berma Saturdays 8721 Telegraph Ave. (Custom) 510-652-2806 (Burmese) $$

Cafe Rakaki 5427 Telegraph Ave. Oakland, 510-601-7999 (African/Ethiopian/Gluten-Free/Organic/Sandwiches) $-$$

Rose Thai 5094 Telegraph Ave. Oakland, 510-450-6522 (Mexican) $$$

Shakee (Temescal) and Rockridge 5095 Telegraph Ave. Building A, Oakland, 510-652-3434 (Thai/Tapas) $

Kung Tong Dog 5202 Telegraph Ave. (Custom) 510-658-2998 (Korean) $$

Mezé 4913 Telegraph Ave. Oakland, 510-652-2106 (Tapas/Wine Bar) $-$$

The Whisky 5356 Telegraph Ave. Oakland, 510-653-9630 (California Cuisine) $$

Square Kansas Restaurant 3815 Mount Diablo Blvd. Lafayette, 925-284-2900 (Korean) $$-$$$

TRI-VALLEY

Blue Agave Bar 605 Main St. Pleasanton, 925-417-1228 (Mexican) $$$

Bridges 44 Church St. Danville, 925-820-2200 (Asian Fusion/California Cuisine) $$$-$$$$

Hop a Springer 125 W. Main St., Pleasanton, 925-600-9200 (American/Sushi) $$$$

Mistress Grill 1061-A Market Pl. San Ramon, 925-830-1844 (Brazilian) $$

Rinder's Gourmet Meats 4825 Hopyard Rd. Suite F2 Pleasanton, 925-461-2383 (Butcher/Deli) $

Rinder's Gourmet Meats 3700 Town & Trailers Dr. Suite G Danville, 925-552-8338, Pittsburg, Calif. $

Ramen Shack Custom Meet Me 2259 Alamo Plaza Alamo, 925-838-0585 (Japanese/Sushi) $$

McKinnon's Steak & Chop House 7400 San Ramon Rd. Dublin, 925-833-9696 (American/Seafood/Steak House) $$$

WALNUT CREEK

Bobushka Custom Deli & Restaurant 1478 Broadway Walnut Creek, 925-210-1770 (Eastern European) $$

Bing Thuey's 1342 Broadway Plaza Walnut Creek, 925-938-2484 (American/Asian Fusion) $$$

La Boucherie 1676 N. Main St. Walnut Creek, 925-401-1400 French/Bistro/ $$$

Peugh's Giant Hamburger 1401 Broadway Ave. Burton Creek, 925-939-4888, (Diner) $

Rinder's Custom Meats 1801 Tarocco Valley Rd. Walnut Creek, 925-952-9383 (Farmers' Deli) $

Lark Creek Walnut Creek 1360 Locust St., Walnut Creek, 925-256-6250 (American/California Cuisine/Organic) $$-$$$

Nunami's Sri Market Sana 1218 Rossmoor Way, Walnut Creek, 925-938-2405, (Deli/Italian) $

1942 Hotel 1521 B Main St., Walnut Creek, 925-279-8118 (Chinese) $$

Yo Sir Yi Shoot & Wine Bar 1511 Mount Diablo Blvd. Walnut Creek, 925-979-0108, (Asian Fusion/California Cuisine/Organic/Tapas/Wine Bar) $$-$$$

FOOD & WINE

CULINARY & WINE

Buffet Barbecue All you can eat, Breakfast, 10:30 a.m. Custom through Aug. 18, 98.75 International House 2299 Piedmont Ave. Berkeley 510-642-0450

Jamina Preview The founders of Three Stand Burma and Fat Moon Feast documents The Community Supported Market! Thu., July 15, 7:30 p.m. Berkeley Public Library, North Waterfront 1170 The Alameda, Berkeley 510-644-6850

Seasonal Limoncello & Wine PW's Executive Chef Bruce White and Creative Consulting Chef Scott Howard congeal in a showdown a la iron Chef with desserts as the dishes—ingredient, Check with us a prix-fixe meal consisting of four side-by-side courses, one by each chef. Custom by Booker and including wine pairings from Rosenblum Cellars, amounts maximizers recommended. Thu. July 15, 7:13 p.m., $82-$65, Fee 2888 Allston Way, Berkeley 510-236-9550, Pier Berkeley, com.

Spaghetti Tuesdays Special on dishes of spaghetti with meat sauce, garlic bread and a side salad. Plus a namely Continued Inclusive, $15. Liberty Ts Comedy & Steakhouse 5304 Hopyard Rd Pleasanton, 925-227-1600

Summer Beer Time Wine pairings from more than 25 Livermore Wineries Thu July 15, 6-8 p.m. $25 (Custom) Bankers on Main St. Pleasanton, 925-484-3199

FARMERS' MARKETS

Alameda Custom Market (Custom) 9:30 a.m. 1 p.m. Free Webster St. (at Haight Ave.), Waterfront St., Alameda

Kaiser Downs Farmers' Market Saturdays, 9 a.m. 1 p.m. Free Bonfair Center, 15555 E. 14th St., San Leandro, 510-357-4500, Shopbydays.com

Custom Market Saturday 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Free Berkeley Adult School, 1700 San Pablo Ave. Berkeley

Diamond Farmers' Market (Custom) Tuesday, 10 a.m. 2 p.m. Free Fields Santa Rosa, Willow Pass Rd. and Grant St. Concord 925-671-3464

Custom Certified Farmers (Custom) Saturdays, 9 a.m. 1 p.m. Free (Custom 3) at Prospect St. Market

Farm Fresh Choice Community Produce Stand Wednesdays, 3-6:30 p.m. 510-848-1784 Ecology Center and Downtown Alcove Community Center, San Pablo Park, 2800 Park St., Berkeley 510-981-5150, 1Shadduck@ci.berkeley.ca.us, Thursdays-Tuesday.

Head Lake Farmers (Custom) Saturdays, 9 a.m. 2 p.m. Free Splash Pad Park, Grand Ave. and Lakepark, (Custom) 510-286-7270, Haidenfarmers.com, Parking, Wheelchair, dog

Berkeley North Project: Fremont Farm Stand Fridays, 3:30-6:30 p.m. (Continues through Oct.) Peoplechamp Memory, 2731 Mont St. Berkeley, 510-704-1181, Peoplechamp.wordpress.com

Irvington Farmers' Custom Sundays, 9 a.m. 1 p.m. Free Bay St. at Fremont Blvd. Fremont

Kaiser Permanente Fremont Farmers' Custom located in the courtyard behind the main hospital Thursdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Kaiser Fremont, 39400 Paseo Padre Pkwy. Fremont

Kaiser Permanente Hayward Farmers' Custom Wednesdays, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., 3rd Floor Hayward, 27400 Hesperian Blvd. Hayward

Kaiser Permanente Martinez Farmers' Market Thursdays, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Kaiser Permanente Martinez Medical Offices, 150 Muir Rd., Martinez,

Kaiser Permanente Vallejo Farmers' Market Fridays, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Free Kaiser Oakland, 3600 Kaiser St. Oakland

Kaiser Permanente Walnut Creek Farmers' Custom Saturdays, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Free Kaiser Medical Center, Union City, 3663 (Custom) Rd. Union City

Kaiser Permanente Walnut Creek Farmers' Market On the cafeteria patio, Tuesdays, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Free, Mount Diablo Medical Center, 1425 South Main St., Walnut Creek

Kensington Farmers' Market Sundays, 10 a.m. 2 p.m. Free Colusa Circle at the Arlington/Civic Navigation

Laurel Custom Farmers' Market Saturdays, 10 a.m. 2 p.m. Laurel Village Farmers' Market, 4[illegible] Macarthur Blvd. Oakland.

Livermore Farmers Market & Winery Thursdays Thursdays, 4-8 p.m. Continuing through Oct. 26 Free Livermore Farmers' Bernoni Carriage Park, Livermore.

Oakland Fremont Market Sundays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Continues through Dec. 18 Free 9th Ave. and Foothill Blvd. Oakland

Orinda Farmers' Fremont Custom Saturdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Continues through Dec. 28 North Oakland Pavilion, 3740 Broadway St. Oakland

North Oakland Farmers Market Thursdays, 3-7 p.m. Free admission, 510-548-3383, EcologyCenter.org Shattuck Ave. at Rose St. Building

Pacific Coast Land Custom Market Farmers (Custom) Sundays, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Intersection Lenton Square, 76 Washington St., Oakland, LandCenterSquare.com

Pinole Farmers' Custom (Custom) Saturdays, 9 a.m. 1 p.m. Free, Fernandez Ave., at Pear St. Alhambra

Pittsburg Produce (Custom) Saturdays, 9 a.m. 1 p.m. Continues through Dec. 30, Free (Custom) Ave. (Custom 3rd & 5th Sts., Pittsburg,

Rossmoor Ski Farmers Market Saturdays, 9 a.m. Free Century Theatre through Nov. 22, Free Crescent Dr., at Centre Castle Blvd., Pleasant Hill

Pleasanton Farmers' Custom Saturdays, 9 a.m. 1 p.m. free Pleasanton Farmers' Market, Ward Angela St. Pleasanton,

Point Richmond Produce (Custom) Wednesdays, 4-6 p.m. (Continues through Oct. 27) free, Park Pl. (at Washington Ave.), Richmond

Richmond Certified Farmers Market Fridays, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Seasonal Farmers' Market, 24th St. & Nevin Ave. Richmond

Richmond Farmer's Custom Fridays, 8 a.m. 5 p.m. Free Richmond Farmers' Market, 24th St. & Nevin Ave. Pleasanton

Saturday Berkeley Farmers (Custom) Saturdays, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. 510-548-3333 EcologyCenter.org, MLK Civic Circle Park, 2854 Martin Luther King Jr.

PICK

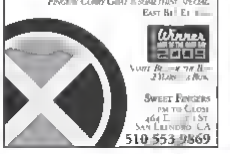
Afternoon Tea

Idle away a summer day the sweet, civilized way at the **Hillside Club** (2286 Cedar St. Berkeley), where the next in a ongoing series of weekly open-to-the-public **Afternoon Tea** happens on Tuesday July 5th Various tea, cookies, and light refreshments are served in the historic clubhouse a City of Berkeley landmark. While sipping and snacking, visitors are chat, read, and play cards or other games. 2 p.m., donation requested. HillsideClub.org. — *Annell Rufus*

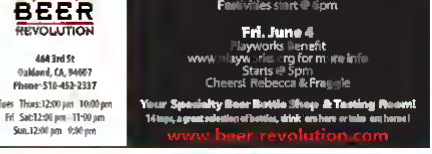
Way, Berkeley 510-981-5800, (Tryout by Co.Us/CenterDisplay.com/?id=12706 (Continued) (Custom) Sundays, 9 a.m. 1 p.m. free DMV Parking Lot, 6300 Clairmont Ave. Oakland

Temescal Berkeley Farmers' Custom Fresh and organic produce breads, specialty foods and more for sale plus special programs and events. Tuesdays, 2-7 p.m. 510-548-3333, EcologyCenter.org, Derby St. (at Martin Luther King, Jr. Way),

Rockridge Farmers' Custom With vendors selling fresh seasonal (Custom) and seafood, plus a basketball court. Saturdays, 9 a.m. 1 p.m. free, Rockridge Center, Shattuck Park, Smith & (Custom) St., Union City.











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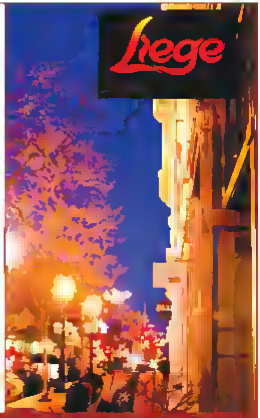
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MOVIES

IT'S A WILD WORLD

Socialist leaders in Latin America (*South of the Border*), US soldiers in Afghanistan (*Restrepo*) and demon zombies in Barcelona (*[REC] 2*)

By Kelly Vance



A demonically possessed vampire/zombie from *[REC] 2*

Oliver Stone's *South of the Border* is the sort of foreign-affairs political report you seldom see on American commercial TV. In fact Stone's documentary directs some of its most scathing contempt at CNN and perennial bugaboo Fox News for parroting the hostility of this country's military-industrial complex toward **Hugo Chavez** of Venezuela, the preferred Latin American "evil menace" of the last decade.

Chavez's crime? He gave the finger to the international Monetary Fund, Big Oil, the George W. Bush administration and the Pentagon by dealing that oil-rich Venezuela — the third-largest exporter of petroleum products to the US — would in it alone without Washington's "help." Former army officer Chavez, who grew up poor and rode a populist electoral wave to the presidency, is presented as a truly "popular" leader concerned more with ordinary Venezuelans than with the wishes of multi-national corporations. For his efforts, he was made the target of a failed right-wing coup attempt in 2002, that he keeps hanging on and driving *yanqui* neo-cons crazy. He's not alone.

After spending a large chunk of its 78 minutes on the self-proclaimed "Bolivarian" Chavez and his socialist vision, Stone's doc visits a number of Latin American leaders and discovers that in his words, "there's a revolution underway in South America." Contrary to the continent's sad history of army-backed coups and oligarchies, this time it's coming from the left rather than the right, and peaceably through elections. Take **Evo Morales** Bolivia which kicked out the American Drug Enforcement Administration and is attempting to recover its own natural resources from US corporations. Or Argentina, where the successive governments of **Cristina Kirchner** and her husband, former president **Néstor Kirchner** defaulted on the country's debt and dumped the IMF. Argentina is now proudly anti "free trade."

One by one, such former US clients as Brazil, Paraguay and Ecuador have embarked on a "new way of thinking." An important piece of their thinking, according to Brazilian president **Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva**, is that "the poor are being treated like human beings." Imagine that. One-time plutocratic dictatorships who took money and support from US companies are now adopting a "neo-liberal" stance and insisting on social justice instead of profits, and it seems to be working.

South of the Border was written by veteran Pakistani-British political analyst and novelist **Tariq Ali** (he was allegedly the subject of **The Rolling Stones** "Street Fighting Man") and pelt-scarred Uk *Guardian* columnist **Mark Weisbrot**, so there's no mistaking the film's progressive slant. All in particular sees the northward flow of people and cultural influences from Latin-America to *los Estados Unidos* as "a bridge of ideas" that can only help spread the word in that respect, the documentary takes a hopeful tone.

Chalk up this provocative doc as the type of project only an **Oliver Stone** (*JFK Born on the Fourth of July Platoon*) could swing — a contrarian report that dares to air points of view that routinely go missing from mainstream news in the US. It will ultimately sell fewer tickets in theaters than one afternoon's worth of *The Twilight Saga: Eclipse*. But at least Stone, Ali, Weisbrot, the Los Angeles-based distributor **Cinema Libre**, and the film's apparently sincere, socially oriented subjects will have had their shot no matter how fleet-ing, at speaking truth to power inside the mighty American media machine. For that reason alone, *South of the Border* is an event.

South of the Border
Directed by Oliver Stone Opens Friday

Restrepo
Directed by Tim Hetherington and Sebastian Junger Now playing.

[REC] 2
Directed by Jaume Balagueró and Paco Plaza With Jonathan Mellor and Manuela Velasco Opens Friday

PFC Juan "Doc" Restrepo a American soldier who died there. Life at OP Restrepo is a curious combination of *shura* or meetings, with valley elders ("We'll flood this place with money and healthcare and projects!" promises the officer to the tribesmen) rambunctious local farmers for crew scorchingly shot, and four or five deadly firefights a day everyday. We observe the soldiers feel the tug of the earth as they burrow in to avoid incoming RPGs, and learn a little bit about the job they do.

The film's fly-on-the-wall style pays dividends. A few of the grunts are restless, immature kids, but the constant threat of death ages them. **Capt. Dan Kearney** relies on by-the-book solutions when he first arrives. Speaking about the constant insurgency, he says "I would fix it and we wouldn't get shot at anymore." That, too changes with experience. We get the feeling that the same dreams, story could have been made in Vietnam, Somalia, Kuwait traq anywhere. This men of Restrepo can't really separate the hostiles from the locals. It's the same old story. You're the foreigner. It's their land, and you're just a visitor.

Tim Hethering-ton and Sebastian Junger's *Restrepo* deserves some high lighting as one of the very few films from our current "war years" — the US has been at war in Iraq and/or Afghanistan far more than seven years now — that resonates after the lights go up.

Journalist/filmmakers Hetherington (*Liberia: An Uncivil War*) and Junger (he wrote *The Perfect Storm*) accompanied a platoon of **US Army** troops deployed in the **Taliban**-occupied **Korengal Valley** in eastern **Afghanistan** ("the deadliest place on earth") to e still more dangerous forward outpost named for

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Editor@EastBayExpress.com

MOVIES THEATERS

To learn where a movie is playing, note the abbreviations at the end of each listing then consult the theater guide at the bottom of this page. Capsule reviews are written by Andrew Gronvall (A.G.) Cole Haddon (C.H.), J.R. Jones (J.J.), and Kelly Vance (K.V.) For a schedule of repertory films see One-Night Stands at the end of these listings. Please send info fourteen days before event date to: ahter@eastbayexpress.com

OPENING

Inception A room incomprehensible. Leonardo DiCaprio and his crew of dip-op spies romp in the subconscious minds of their adversaries while they steal in order to steal corporate secrets. Or some such tedious given writer-director Christopher Nolan an excuse to drag 71 tons of somnolent action and a stupid largely wasted cast (Ellen Page, Marion Cotillard, Michael Caine, Cillian Murphy, and

to keep the plot skeleton dead endlessly. But it stood down to an ordinary spy flick anyway, with laughable dialogue, made no less numbing and with Memento, Nolan's fans and buzz maybe what he could do with a big budget. Now the question is: Is he should have stood at his budget made away from and He'll only muck it up. One way to tell-wape wable fun! will this bloodbrothers would be in full upkeep while watching and dream up a movie movie yourself. Try it. You'll would s been good. Costarring Ken Watanabe, Tom Hardy, Tom Berenger, and Joseph Gordon-Levitt. (140 min.).

[KV] [APC, BS, BC, BP, CWC, CI, CEPH, DR, CUC, CAPH, CH, EH, CCC, GL, REC, WW2]

The Kids Are All Right Gay relationship issues at sophisticated seasons, and this story and knowing goofiness rather what happens to a suburban lesbian couple (Annette Bening, Julianne Moore) when the baby bachelor "predator" of their sperments (Mark Ruffalo) shows up and starts winning hearts. movie-director Thadeus Vance Cannon. High Art) and screenwriting-mentor Stuart Blumberg have a keen eye for the details of contemporary California life and the three lead performances take us deep and situational issues not only of domestic child-rearing, but of the blood ties deeply of sexual laughs. Bening is especially fine on the matter one, who drives a Volvo wagon and worships Joni Mitchell. Recommended. (104 min.) [KV] CA

Predators Heavily armed badasses, thrown by a force unknown and an unexplored jungle are mustering-up prey-sport by the species which made its debut in the Arnold Schwarzenegger/Jesse Ventura vehicle *Predator* (1987). Among others, there's an elite mercenary (Adrien Brody), a Joseph Conrad-ian Freedom fighter (Alice Braga), a Southeast-Asian death-row gang-of-death (Walton Goggins) and an alcoholic for a Mexican drug cartel (Danny Trejo). This is less a remorseful difficult than a permanent-ly of the Mexican movie ABC's Lost, Sidney and World War II programmers, and all the money in the world. The director is Robert Rodriguez, and he puts expression in the subway mark, but the movie does what it must: summer blockbuster stuff, which is finally basic Harrison Ford-ish! directed (167 min.) CCH, DPC, IN, BG, BP, CWC, CB, CEPH, EH, CUC, DR, BH, BC, LMB

The Sorcerer's Apprentice Once the filmmakers have dispensed with a grueling Disneyland prologue set in Arthurian England, this charmless, Harry Potter knockoff is a mildly likely festival of popcorn. Bad Monster fool by Alfred Molina (magnificent as ever) plot to steal a magical dragon, recruiting a reluctant-seeming staff from plucky wizards and by

Theater Guide

This guide explains the abbreviations in the end of each capsule. Al — Landmark Albany AEC — Alameda Theatre & Cinema Bkl — Brandon Concord BM — Cinemark Blackhawk, BP — Bonnen Pittsburg, BR — AMC Bay Street CA — Landmark California CAPH — Cinekink Pleasant Hill, CB — Century Solano, CCC — Century Contra Costa, CEPH — Century Pleasant Hill CH — Century Hilltop, CHP — Century Hayward, CR — Cinemark Rowell, CRC — Regal Crow Canyon, CUC — Chabot Space and Science, CWC — Century Union City, CWG — Century Walnut Creek, DR — AMC Dean Valley, GL — Grand Lake, IN — Regal Jack London, KA — Kerr 8 Bal — Rialto, SH — Shattuck, PFA — Pacific Film Archive, PW — Landmark Piedmont, RGC — Rialto Cinemas Cerrito, RITC — Rialto Cinemas Elmwood, RH — Regal Hacienda, RT — Cinemas Theater B — Landmark Shattuck, UMA — UA Berkeley, UMB — UA Emery Bay 9 View, WW5 — West View Saloon



MOT

Nicolas Cage (surviving any movie his average). The outcome of the struggle floodlights (at top design-line, who's got Hoover's flexibility back) he rarely turned seeking an actress young impressionable must learn to believe in his content. The actor is born godlike and hands than the Primer pictures, and some of the angelic actress built actress New York City landmarks are eye-popping; there's also a genuinely affecting romance between Marshall and relishing newcomer Teresa Palmer. Jon Voight as Cage's mentor is a hoot. (PG-13 for sci-fi violence and some crude humor) (109 min.) (★★½) WWS

Brook of his name Elmer Stone as action-John Angelou relies. An better than a certain as serious Stone and his documentary in the Wild quick Wall Street and Yankee nemesis, a reporter on Venezuela's Hugo Chavez to find out what drives and wrote author apparently According to Stone and writers Tariq Ali and Mark Weisbrot, the lively sentient "neo-liberal Bolivarian Seoul-democrat governments in Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, sentient and Ecuador are the leading edge of a new wave in the socialist hemisphere. His small bio and what they teach sentient be compiled and a step-off in Cuba to see Rock Castro? You're not likely to get a report on this on CNN or, perish the thought, Fox News (102 min.) (N.Y.)PICK

Stumbling critics! Stewart Rafill directs this wrestling Nashville group of friends who pose a Blair Witch content be overdone. (PG-13)

[Rec] 2 Sequel to hands Balaguero and Paco Plaza's well produced handheld-camera horror lively quick up made (REC) set at a hotel, a pitch-black Barcelona apartment building infested with rabid fast-moving, zombie-like angels, demonically possessed vampire/zombies, filling screen by an intrepid squad (Jonathan Mellor) a TV news sextet (Manuela Velasco), and a police SWAT team. Since this they all have Spanish sans Alex, the Extreme from hear the Day Shine films, with a dipole of Saw for pulse reserved. Spanish leads to Sold Carroll's sound design (85 min.) (★½)

ONGOING

The A-Team Joe Carnahan reared this updated movie version of the TV classic, featuring Liam Neeson, Bradley Cooper, and sentient Cagney '85. (PG-13)

Best Worst Movie Hands out as a gleeful documentary tribute to a beloved-but-terrible low-budget (1990) hands hands. Troll 2 gradually nicknamed endured a depressing medication on your culture fickle fame has anxiety of romantic, etc. The guide is part-time some Fr. George Hardy, star of the original movie and now a family small-town Baltimore dentist. At first he's a bemused by his long-ambition but the fun wears off. While most members say not so lucky and the original creative fellow Claudio Fragasso is a bit of an enigma. If you're already a Troll 2 fan, no and will be back to after you learn saving (no – but if you're not, you may wish to drop the subject entirely. Michael Paul Stephenson, who swung in the original film, write and directed this as his 1 remaining debut. (83 min.) (R.V.)

Billy Kwan's Formerly "doesn't always have to make death." Unemployed and drinking married and has a job a non-threatening Asian-American sentient with from the Times, but by Andy David as a person guard who yearns to be an brave Garcia and Julianne Margulies are especially fine as long-separated Victor and Joyce to any Emily Rhoades and Alex Arias as movie roles as Vince's acting class eavesdropping from Far-Off Manhattan. Writer-director Raymond De Felitta hands the territory and and the piece-specific culture and up the dialogue's movie as a stripper, the teenage son a penchant for fat women, hands Joyce's years for the young, as-can whose brings home, etc. Remember De Felitta (The Truth About My Folks) earned this style of movie's-but-relaxed comedy hands easily. I can't (107 min.) (N.Y.)RICE

Cyrus The Baghead boys writing-directing sentient Jay and Mark Duplass try their hands at a larger-budget, semi-indirectly grown-up relationship drama. And it flops. Homely middle-aged guy John C. Reilly finally dream a woman he can relate to single mother named Tamel Toni has jealous, possessive twenty-something son (Jonah Hill) as his rival. It's edgier in the casting, and the passive-aggressiveness gradually turns into comical. Duplass Bros. hads evidently learned how seeing and characterization, but all this "romantic comedy" can do is be over awkwardly from potential humor to yuck and funny sentiment. comedy like it can't seem up to mend. And an able cast – Reilly, Tomei, Catherine Keener, Matt Walsh – gone to waste. (92 min.) (R.V.)CAPH CA PM RR

Despicable Me As if to remind us of what we're otherwise being posting, this superior animation-animated family hang-tantalizer and one-dash of the following bad ideas. Typical references that a to just over kids' friends – in than a moments in hands the characters had any means to a 70s Winnie hit. The tropical performance is pretty funny actually, and everything else about the movie is wonderful, especially the visuals and character design. The boss character is a villain, Stand-style supervillain (Steve Carell, doing Peabody-like-mad mode) who's suddenly hammered by a brash young newcomer (Jason Segel), as part of the old-timer's plan to even the score for seeking three plucky orphan girls, and sentient they send an under the exotic depths of his lessons. Like the best kids entertainment, this creates a daffy little world all its own. Chris Renaud and Pierre Coffin (PG min.) (C,D-3ATC, BS, BW, BC, SP, CWC, CR, CSPH, CH, CUC, CH, BW, WCC, CRC, WH, JL, LAU, WWS

Everyone Else (Alle Anderen) Claudia Sternsteiner Maren Ade's effective well-acted character study inhabits a dark, an upper-class world of the Germans. The emotional vacation in which a relationship unravels in a deliberately setting. An reserved emptiness seemed Chris (Lars Eidinger) thinks his impulsive, needy girlfriend Gitti (Birgit Minichmayr) is his. Mostly a villa in Sardinia, and they get on most others' nerves in a slow, unpleasant. Writer-director Ade creates the sense of things thinks sand-paper everyday Venezuela that and bland second mean. With fine support by Hans-Jochen Wagner and Nadja Maenchen as the couple Chris and Gitti try be emotionally to avoid (119 min.) (N.Y.)

Exit Through the Gift Shop Fascinating deconstruction, by the by it good. Renowned London-based handpaint (and graffiti) artist Banksy devised this mastermind Thierry Guetta portrayed his love of documentary-guerrilla artwork, and about a Venezuela video of Legal footage of appears in hands over the years. Art is viewed as a high-profile high-priced artist in his own right, known as Mr. Brain Wilson. Banksy turns out. Depending on and handout it we without Guetta's subsequent low-ethos a profession known as a never-to-be-repeated art movement, or just another LA hustle. Biggest mystery of all: How Banksy commandeered this documentary subject to director of the Mr. Brain Wilson movie. Featuring hands Shepard Fairey, Banksy and hands to the hands of creation (87 min.) (N.Y.)RR

Get Him to the Greek Familiar Judd Apatow gag-comedy screenplay has a handy weapon: Russell Brand (pictured). He's running his hilarious "Aldous Snow" rock-star character from Apatow's forgettable *Sarah Marshall*. Notorious recovered/downtown and/remember-when sentient is stockpiling to revive his music with a reunion of Los Angeles Greek Theatre and it's up to Funny for once hands Green (fellow Apatow-player hands Hill) – a Anderson-directed label executive to babysit Aldous in time way been sentient to the gig, through a gambler of drugs, babes, strip parties, etc. Brand, Hill, Colm Meaney (as sentient aren't Elizabeth Moss (as Aaron's wife), and Kristen Bell, Diddy Combs (Aldous hasn't have a Beef day and so will you. Wilmer and position with perfect timing by Sarah Marshall sentient Nicholas Stoller (109 min.) (N.Y.)C (LAE)

The Girl Who Played With Fire (Flickan som lekte med elden) The hotline adventures of Sweden's

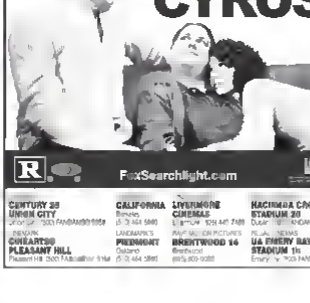
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folk tale can be reinvigorated into a score? Perhaps most disappointing of all, on suit in the film wears tights. Also with William Hurt, Danny Huston, Mark Addy and Eileen Atkins. 140 minutes. (AE) (R) (KJV) 3DY

Shrek Forever After Mike Mitchell directs the latest instalment in the Shrek series, in which Seven hitches a deal with Rumpelstiltskin. Starring Mike Myers, Cameron Diaz, and Eddie Murphy. (1:40) (R)

Solomon The story of everyone's horrible morning. 1AM. 2PM. CBC

Solitary Man Michael Douglas' Hamptons-based, and delivers a performance to stand alongside his 1987 role as Gordon Gekko in this otherwise iffy portrait of a man sleeping into a seriously gross old age. Ruined partner New York businessman Ben Kalmen (Douglas) is seemingly trying to sweet his ways when getting busted for fraud, but his instinct is always to complete unsavoury when it comes to women. He can't resist trying the player. This unpleasant middle-aged lothario is played by Mr. Douglas, with Susan Sarandon, new sleigh-daughter Imogen Poots, and mild latter Danny DeVito miniature add scenarios, written and directed by Brian Koppelman and David Levien, has a whiff of soap opera about it, but Ivana Sappelman and Douglas add the flavours to it. (Sunday 8 (Midnight) Rodrigo Prieto shoulder and has his cameraperson on the way through. Also with Mary-Louise Parker and Jesse Eisenberg. (89 mins.) (AV) (MCE, Y

Stonewall Uprising Kate Davis and David Heilbroner's stone-but-didactic documentary is a deep-background account of the "queer riot" beside it that's her on NYC's West Village that effectively launched the gay movement in the US. Using source period news footage plus talking-head testimony from such luminaries as former New York mayor Ed Koch and actor Lypsi Cyndi Lauper, filmmakers tell what happened when the Raiders of the Stonewall Inn on Christopher Street fought back against a police raid one wild July night in 1969. As one man remembers: America thought we were better homosexual. Blacks and Jews were so innocent, and oddly enough we American. (89 min.) (A.V.)

To Be an Astronaut Whether what it claims? Take a trip inside the gates of NASA for an IMAX-an-horrible view of everything from pressed to. (45 (48 min.) CBC

Toy Story 3 Toy Story 3 Bloody Useless at Tom Hanks' Real Lagrimas (Tim Allen) and the rest of the new-outdated toys get predictably filament in a daycare centre, and it is a horrible place after lights-out, ruled by a pink-stuffed bunny bear that smells and his strawberry (Mist Hanks). If big new additions to the animated toy lineup, Barbie and Ken, of course, hopelessly out of the 70s (Jodi Whitaker and Michael Keaton) it's impossible to imagine anyone who's had ever marginally happy childhood having the movie — no matter



Predators

Red (Edition) Plot may bore to think Continuing a trend, Toy Story 3 is every bit as sentimental as its. Directed by Lee Unkrich, from Michael Arndt's screenplay that the original story by John Lasseter, Andrew Stanton and Joe Ranft (1:43 min.). (R) (KJV) (AE, SS, DV, BC, XP, CWC, CB, CBPH, CH, CUC, BH, CCC, GL, DPC, BH, IE, UAR, WWS)

Red Twilight Saga: Eclipse No reason be anyone other than the included (and through the third chapter of the phenomenally successful pulse-lite romance franchise. Despite it's big house, pitting the Cullen vampires — allied for once with the Native American werewolves — against a group of renegade bloodsucking, cute ones, from Seattle, the narrative adornment skews one such. Bella (Kristen Stewart) is still having trouble making up her mind between vamp boyfriend Edward (Robert Pattinson, a genuinely rotten actor) and muscle-headed wolf kid Jacob (Taylor Lautner). Suggestion: Next

Red horrible why not go all the way and place it a museum? Featuring Screw horrible Bruce Dallas Bentley and a bestiary of other Razzmatazz as Fiona horrible Redgrave with no special Star by Jessie Slaats. The silly screenplay is adapted by Melissa Rosenberg from Stephenie Meyer's second (1:24 min.) (R) (KJV) (AE, BS, BV, BC, BP, CWC, CB, CBPH, CH, CUC, DH, EH, DPC, GL, S, CWC, RH, A, RCC, WWS)

Up in the air George Clooney runs again shirken as a slick corporate fixer who's hidden incredulous. Here for client of Jason Reitman (Juno), Clooney's "termination facilitator" Ryan Bingham, who zealously jets at and out American home. He flies and Wichita, Wing redundant employees by the unadorned and has one that pretend cocktail up heroine of frequent-flyer miles. On his trail, he meets a newly minted business school pretend hostile Alex (Anna Kendrick, in a nice turn) and feels sorry for her. And maybe for himself. The screenplay, by Reitman and Reitman Turner from Walter Kim's novel, sums up some of the most horrible trends of the 21st century (so far) into a bundle of pointed witty jousts and stylish as laugh at them. Good job. With Vera Farmiga as a frequent sleepover (105 min.) (R) (KJV)

Wild Roses (Vilde hvirvler hallon) Kant of horrible Finnish author Alex Hetzler may intrigue — or maybe not — but the slight line of an horrible horrible story where cannot Georgia (Andrii Buvaral) in his veterans wife Suzanne (Anne Cantrup) and a devilish named Marguerite (Sabine Azéma) where sisters hunt Georgia finds on a parking garage floor. The film's elusive charm rests on its characters and their slightly cockeyed points of view. Reviews (Last Year at Marienbad) Hitchcock Mon Amour) with help from Alex Revel and Laurent Herbiet (adopting Christian Gailly's novel keep the proceedings light and lively, with a flotilla of flashbacks becoming increasingly horrible of Georges and Marguerite. Extemporaneous crowd and Matthieu Amalric (Beyond the Supposing and as a mental sufferings and a millionaire, respectively (104 min.) (R) (KJV)

Winter's Bone Writer-director Isaac Blank bases her feature debut with Bones in the Snow (2004). A blank working-class drama with Vera Farmiga giving a tenacious performance as a solid-minded young Winter Farmiga has since insisted on to those pretend projects, but with Will Arnett as high-Glenn Close, stops, even further Bone the unashamed ladder to the into-poor Ozarks. A 17-year-old girl (Jennifer Lawrence) struggles to turn to be has mentally inexacerbated mama and old younger siblings. The situation grows into more bleak after her daddy busted for pressed crystal meth. Story then home over to a half bondsman and then companions and needs to find him before the family is evicted, but the murderous meth dealers he supplied what him to stay and. The social detail of a 21st-century mountain community is completely persuasive, heightening the drama immeasurably. The movie wouldn't be half as suspenseful if Granik hadn't sealed us into this little enclave of wilderness and poverty. With Lauren Hassard. (99 min.) (J) (GAPN, S

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THE STREET NO ONE WATCHES (R)
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ONE NIGHT STANDS

THURSDAY, JULY 15

Easy Rider (1969) A Theater Near You: The Best and Brightest in Ancient Films and Personalities (PFA, 7:00)

Horrible Awareness (1950-date 2010), Movement Theatre Live (RCE, 7:00)

FRIDAY, JULY 16

Solaris: Movement (167 min. 1961) Modernist Master: The Cinema of Filmmaker Reid (PFA, 7:00)

Man outside 185 min. 2007) Music, Movies, and Magic Under the Stars: San Francisco Opens in the Silver Screen (Sendi Center, Yerba College, Fremont, 8:15)

The Element of Tools (110 min. 1960) Modernist Master: The Cinema of Filmmaker Reid (PFA, 9:35)

SATURDAY, JULY 17

Seven Samurai (208 min. 1954) Akira Kurosawa Centennial (PFA, 7:00)

Home Goes The Neighborhood (2010) Townsend Street Cinema (49th St. and Telegraph Ave entrance, 8:15)

SUNDAY, JULY 18

Hands Over the City (110 min., 1960), Modernist Master: The Cinema of Filmmaker Reid (PFA, 5:00)

Opera Ole Below (118 min., 2010) Film Screenings at La Peña: La Peña Cultural Center, Berkeley, 2:00)

Easy Rider (91 min., 1969) A Theater Near You: The Best and Brightest in Ancient Films and Personalities (PFA, 7:00)

MONDAY, JULY 19

Horrible Awareness (150 min. 2010) Movement Theatre Live (RCE, 7:00)

Night Tide (84 min. 1961), Hollywood by Modernist of Horror (PFA min. 1962), Forbidden Thrills: Cult school and Cocktails (Forbidden) sound The Lounge Ascension, 7:30)

WEDNESDAY, JULY 21

London Awareness (150 min. 2010) Movement Theatre Live (RCE, 7:00)

No Regrets for Our Youth (118 min. 1946), Akira Kurosawa Centennial (PFA, 7:00)

Breakfast Some (77 min. 2005) Modernist by Ivy Rosalind from MovieBin.org (Hunsinger Hall, Movement, 7:30)

THE INEVITABLE RISE OF R.O.D.

A hot local singer gives his audience the blotch treatment.

By Rachel Swan



R.O.D Joseph Schell

R.O.D spent the first seven years of his life sleeping in cars and living in one-room motels. He shared beds with his mother and young siblings. His family moved around a lot from Hunter's Point to East Oakland to the Fillmore district. Asked what his parents did for a living, R.O.D. was cryptic. "Whatever it took," he said. "They was living life, we'll just keep it like that."

There's no question that the 29-year-old Oakland singer came up hard. But you'd never know it now. Buoyed by the success of his new single, "Can't Stand You," R.O.D. won't hit the streets unless he's suited and booted. Last Wednesday he and manager **Morchez Frazier** arrived to a fancy North Oakland recording studio in matching gear: truck jackets, crew neck T-shirts, impeccable sneakers. R.O.D. accessorized with princess-cut diamonds — thirty karats on his neck, fifteen on his wrist, and one in each ear. He has seven tattoos on both arms. One is a gush of flames. The other is a portrait of things he values: stacks of rolled up dollar bills, a **Chevy** emblem, two women in bikinis.

Getting this far was no easy feat, particularly in a town that isn't known for incubating male R&B stars. R.O.D. — whose real name is **Roderick Anthony Culpo Jr.** — sang professionally for more than a decade before dropping his first radio hit. He came from a gospel tradition, serving as youth choirs at **Berean Christian Fellowship** in the Fillmore, and **Cosmopolitan Baptist Church** in Oakland. As an adult, R.O.D. used his church upbringing to provide hooks for rappers, and croon about secular themes.

With that type of training, R.O.D. easily distinguished himself from the typical gun-for-hire. He sings in key on command. When **KMEL** radio personality **Sanu G** challenged him to do so during a recent on-air interview, R.O.D. took her to task. *I can't stomach* and you he trilled intoning the line in a thick, syrupy vibrato. *Girl you muuake it hard to stay*

It's perhaps the most R&B-inflected R&B song to hit Bay Area audiences in a long time, and it catapulted R.O.D. to regional fame. He wrote the lyrics about a particularly tempestuous, ill-fated relationship. But these aren't the usual bed-breakup blues. Rather R.O.D. documents his whole mess of anger and misgivings. He's prickly. He blames the ex-girlfriend for everything. He talks about lying awake in bed and sitting in the car for half hour stretches, fuming. "Can't Stand You" has the cadence of a soulful. That's only exacerbated by the sample that R.O.D used on the song's hook, a drawn out *Billionaire* from Oakland rapper **Too $hort.**

"Being from the Bay Area, that's like the stamp, you know what I'm saying?"

Self-branding is a dicey thing for guys who want to make it in the rarefied R&B world. It's all well and good to seduce your female audience with torch songs or break up ballads. Yet to succeed in an increasingly fickle Bay Area market, you have to pass muster with male hometeers as well. And that can be a biatch.

A few local singers figured out how to do it. **J. Valentine** gave the genre a hip-hop edge with his 2006 song, "Go Dumb." Another artist, **London** erred on the grown and sexy side — meaning tender lyrics, panic string sections, and R-rated content. On the surface, R.O.D. sounds a lot like his peers. Persona-wise he's grittier with a subtler sense of humor and a keen ability to capture the ugly side of romance.

Incorporating a Too Short sample wasn't the only bit of marketing genius that helped boost R.O.D.'s career. He also had the foresight to use **Twitter** as a platform. Last year R.O.D leaked an entire twelve-song mix tape on his Twitter page (Twitter.com/TheRODProject), followed by "Can't Stand You," which he Tweeted in October. In November, an intern at KMEL asked R.O.D., for a clean version of the song. In December, it landed on **DJ Mind Motion**'s Morning Master Mix. By February, it was spinning in regular rotation.

R.O.D.'s next spate of songs is already available on his **MySpace** page. (He'll drop another mix tape called *Here I Come* in August.) "Beautiful is harmonically superior to "Can't Stand You," and sounds more like a traditional love ballad. "Sex," with rapper **Sonny Forecast**, is surprisingly chaste for at least what sodcast "Can't is a come-on that sounds like it put-on. But the best is infectious.

For all his testimons on recordings R.O.D is soft-spoken in person. His phone bleats four times in the course of a half hour. He keeps in touch with the ex-girlfriend who inspired "Can't Stand You." "She don't like it at all," he said.

And Too Short? "He thinks it's hilarious." ●

Show Details

R.O.D performs at Vine Ultra Lounge (1251 Arroyo Way, Walnut Creek) on Friday July 16. 10 p.m. $20. VineUltraLounge.com

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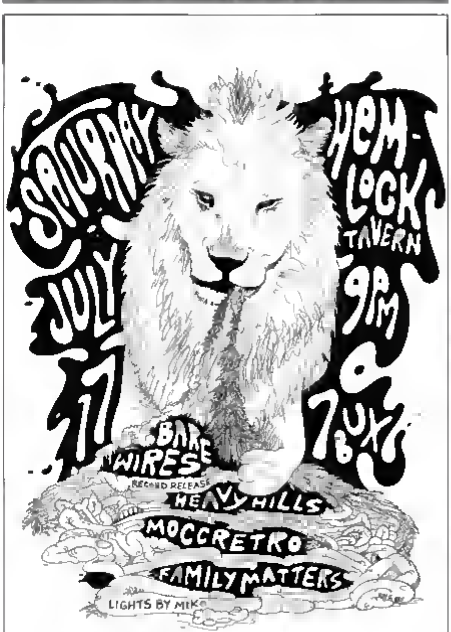
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IRISH IRE

Altar of Plagues provides an angry soundtrack to Earth's ruin.

By Rachael Keene

Given the extreme degree to which humans are fouling our nest lately the music of **Altar of Plagues** provides the eco-minded head-banging us some cathartic. Or perhaps the band's latest EP, ***Tides*** only makes us angrier. This Irish black-metal four-piece is, after all, relentlessly and fiercely apocalyptic. Its soundtrack — a persistent earth-shattering din — befits an audience recently rocked by the BP oil spill and all the frustrations that followed. In its own way anger pays dividends.

And indeed the 35-minute *Tides* is a masterpiece of doom-laden post metal. Think of the scene in the zombie-horror flick ***28 Days Later*** where the **Godspeed You! Black Emperor** song plays ominously against a tone of deserted London, then magnify that times a thousand — and you get the drift. This is outof-tunes pro-environmental black metal with double-kick blast beats used sparingly and for maximum effect.

Bleak as it is, guitarist **James Kelly** insists he's "a very happy person" day-to-day. It's just that he's compelled to direct his anger toward the "modern modus operandi."

"Performance is physical exercise for us," he said during a recent interview from his home in Cork. "We use it to expel aggressive energy. We don't feel angry after a performance — just exhausted and invigorated at the same time."

Cleary Kelly is nature-inclined. His lyrics for Altar of Plague's 2009 full-length debut ***White Tomb*** were influenced by his stint working in the ancient landscape of Ireland's Burren, a breathtaking area of limestone caverns. *Tides* on the other hand is the result of days working on the Atlantic coast, learning the history of people who inhabited small Irish islands during the 19th century.

"The EP was also recorded during an extremely harsh winter here in Ireland, and I think that affected the mood of the music," he said. "*Tides* was less planned then *White Tomb*. We wanted [*Tides*] to feel chaotic and raw, like the ocean that inspired it."

That ocean might have been a fount of inspiration but it also washed away humanity. *Tides* sounds hopeless. Its dismal tone leads a listener to feel there's no way out. Socialism, capitalism, religion, the Internet — all fail to thwart our extinction. So do the guys in Altar of Plagues drink beer to cope?

"Yes," said Kelly unapologetically. "But because we enjoy social interaction. I don't drink to escape the things you described — for that there's writing music and words, enjoying nature and art." For a moment Kelly seemed to have a change of heart. "As important as it is to think about the ills in this planet," he said "it's also important to enjoy life and be happy." ●

Altar of Plagues plays at the Elbo Room (647 Valencia St., San Francisco) Friday July 16, 9 p.m. $11, $13. Elbo.com

To share this story type: xbx.by/pr/AltarofPlagues
Editor@EastBayExpress.com


Ryan Kanazija — James Sipe

NOTHING PURE CAN STAY

Audrye Sessions graced Uptown with an entirely new sound.

By Chris Ball

Oakland's **Audrye Sessions** has had a long two years. It signed a record deal with **Black Seal** in 2008, quickly released an EP and full-length debut, assiduously toured supporting bands like **Manchester Orchestra** and **Fun.**, switched drummers and on July 10, returned to **The Uptown** with a very different sound. At present, the band appears to have no label. The only real similarity between the Audrye Sessions of 2008 and the Audrye Sessions of today is the name: the three core members, and the chilling, explosive live performances that the band has become known for. Luckily for the crowd at the Uptown the explosiveness survived.

Audrye Sessions is and always has been a band that wears its influences on its sleeve. Its self-titled debut had enough throwbacks to Nineties British rock that an unknowing listener might believe it came out in the same year as **Radiohead**'s *The Bends*. Despite the exhausted style, Audrye Sessions garnered support because of exceptional rock sensibilities, lyrics, and singer **Ryan Kanazija**'s soaring falsetto. Those elements were largely abandoned in favor of an ethereal, melodic rock associated with acts like **Sigur Rós** with hints of a more modern Radiohead thrown in. Kanazija's falsetto still soared, but instead of using it to chunk huge rock anthems, he blended into the noisy soundscapes that rose and fell over **Alicia Campbell**'s locked in bass lines and **Michael Knox**'s innovative chord progressions. Echoing guitar lines (occasionally played with a cello bow) and often indistinguishable lyrics helped shuttle the simple rock pop group into an altogether different category of alt rock.

While a sparsely attended show may not be the best location to introduce new material there was a sense that the band was finally beginning to make the music that it loves. Its new material may sound different, but it also proved to be a step in a much more original direction. Audrye Sessions may be in a transitional phase but the future looks bright. ●

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TENDER, NASTY, STILL BLAZING

Girl bands brash Latin rockers and *cajón*-laced country

Los Lobos
Tin Can Trust

With such landmark albums as 1984's *How Will the Wolf Survive?* and 1990's mind-melding *Kiko*, Los Lobos effectively supplanted the Sixties/Seventies versions of Santana as the greatest Latin-American rock band. Not even Santana produced such a strong run of quality albums. Los Lobos' newest, *Tin Can Trust* further cements this LA institution as one of the greatest American bands, period.

One of the most remarkable strengths of Los Lobos is its penchant for experimentation. Indeed, band members used their studio as a laboratory to try different genres, instruments, and production techniques. *Tin Can Trust* — a pleasing jaunt through slow dark, psychedelic blues-rock, upbeat *cumbia* and *norteño* numbers, and even a rumbling instrumental fuzz-guitar rave-up — features wildly different-sounding tracks, its profound intensity flows through even the most drastic changes in tempo and instrumentation.



On the blazing opener "Burn It Down," multi-instrumentalist **David Hidalgo** (with backing vocal help from blues queen **Susan Tedeschi**) stews into this spotlight he avoided in recent years, when he appeared as a tolerated sit-in rather than a leader. Hidalgo's guitar and **Rob Dylan** and **Rumbilin' Jack Eliot**. His sounds menacingly cool on "Burn It Down," somehow shredding any sense of cliché from words like "destiny" and "dignity." *I locked the door until my damned eyes hurt* he sings, within a simple, driving acoustic guitar and stand-up bass strummer backed with a **Sonic Youth**-esque distorted-guitar explosion. A genuinely badass cover of the **Grateful Dead**'s cruel-hearted "West L.A. Fadeaway" yields similar results.

It is hard not to be moved by that kind of musical fearlessness, especially from a bunch of guys in their fifties. (Shout! Factory Records)

— *Adam Perry*

Tender Trap
Dansette Dansette

One thing I've always admired about Europeans is how they like a performer regardless of the passing of time and trends. How else to explain the formative influences on the UK's **Tender Trap** — its (more obvious) inspirations include early-1960s radio pop especially that of female singers and vocal groups (think **Shangri-Las**) the hook laden, somewhat shambling punk pop of the homegrown **C-86** crowd (i.e., **The Pastels**, **The Shop Assistants**) and the "wall of sound" mini-symphonies of pre-felan **Phil Spector**.

With former members of **Talulah Gosh** **Heavenly** and **Marilyn Research**, **Tender Trap** is by about its ancestry. The opening title l um name-checks iconic doyennes **Leslie Gore** and **Sandie Shaw** while "Danger Overboard" begins with the same drum cadence as the **Ronettes** immortal "Be My Baby." **Amelia Fletcher** sings in a winsome cotton candied, slightly adolescent tone. Their songs have bittersweet melodies and those adorable "ba-be-bah" background choruses common to the **Cowsills** and **Turtles**, and the band's overall instrumental approach is raw and garage-y but not overly lo-fi. But *Dansette* isn't all tra-la-la retro-twee. Fletcher's lyrics aren't about love and innocence but rather innocence lost. The Traps peppy songcraft belies its lordly sarcastic lyrics — "Girls With Guns" warns its protagonist that he's slated for *A bullet to your brain/You think it's just a fantasy but you are gonna feel/Serious intel pen* "Danger Overboard" has an exultant chorus (underlined by searing fuzzed-out guitar), and "2 To Tha N" has the surging drive of the **Buzzcocks**.



Dansette is only significant flaw is that at 32 minutes, it's too damn short. Otherwise it's one of the year's best faux-as the indie-pop division. (Slumberland)

— *Mark Keresman*

The Real Nasty
Proper Cuts

Too many bands talk about their "sound" as if they've gonn and single-handedly revolutionized pop music. Few groups ever really do anything new, so tip your hat to **The Real Nasty** for actually coming up with a fresh approach. The trio includes acoustic bassist and singer-songwriter **Ryan Lukas** and electric guitarist **Jacob Gossoman** but the wild card is **Matthew Smith** who plays *cajón* the Peruvian hand drum that looks like a packing crate and combines the sounds of kick drum, conga, and snare.



The album is divided between rock and country-ish tunes, with the *cajón* sounding most innovative on the country ones. It adds a smith Latin swing to the **Johnny Cash** honest of "The Surprise," a hint of funk to "A Pretty Nice Place," and turns "Never the Plan" from a typical country shuffle into something more puzzling. The rockers are carried by Groopman's inventive guitar work and Lukas' new wave-flavored bass. "Time In Lounge" is a melodic punk rocker and kiss off to an ex, with an ironic edge. "K C's Blues" lives up to its title with Ryan's howling blues vocals and electric guitar, while "I Don't Love You Anymore" is a poetic, R&B-flavored ballad enhanced by Lukas' whispered vocal. The nastiest song is "Bad Medicine," an R&B-meets-country thing with a killer opening line: *My girl's on drugs and I am too* (Opus Music)

— *j poet*

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BY KIDS





The Stone Foxes
Bears & Bulls

There are some definite jam band elements on *Bears & Bulls*, and a lot of blues influences. The Stone Foxes have serious chops and they know it. Such triumphal lyrics as *I killed Robert Johnson* should be a clue. The whole album is like a quick trip back to the dragged-out, laid-back Seventies. If only more bands still made records like this. (self released)

At Cafe du Nord (2170 Market St., San Francisco) on July 17 8:30p.m. $10-$12

Zwo Hour Ine
Zwo Hour Ine

Most of this self-titled album is instrumental with some distinct Latin overtones in the rhythms. There are also some lovely vocals from Michelle Bailey on a few tracks. It's an accomplished album overall with elements of smooth jazz, R&B and soul blended seamlessly together. What really stands out though is the level of technical accomplishment — all the musicians here are solid but saxophonist Ric Alexander is particularly impressive. (Jazzy Jams)

At Oracle Arena (7000 Coliseum Way, Oakland) on July 17 & 18 10 a.m. $7-25

Kevin Beadles
You Can't Argue with Water

There's something reminiscent of The Eagles in *You Can't Argue with Water*. Not in the same level of accomplishment obviously but then who is? It's a fun album to listen to though — a blend of rock and blues with the occasional nod to country. Beadles has a charming voice, too, just rough enough to be appealing. There are a few hints of Elvis Costello too, just to add to the quirky charm. (Tactile Records)

Solcraft
Solcraft

Evidently this is why guitar stores put up "No 'Stairway to Heaven'" signs. Solcraft's members are more or less competent, and there's enough talent here that the band may evolve into something better. But it's going to need to step away from the pointless guitar solo and the derivative vocal style. (self released)

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Bad Religion/ tickets go on sale Monday, July 19 at 10 am. Mon., Sept. 20, 8:15 pm. $25. Mezzanine

Dead Boys, Rebels, tickets go on sale Friday, July 16 at 10 am. Thu. Aug. 26. 9 p.m., free. Stork Club

Rosarium/ Indie Love Affair: flowers go on sale Wednesday, July 28 at 10 a.m. Fri. Aug. 13. 8 p.m. $11. Rickshaw Stop

Gomez tickets go on sale Sunday, July 18 at 10 am. Mon., Sept. 11. 8 p.m. $26.50. The Regency Center

Rising Sun, tickets go on sale Wednesday, July 21 at 10 am. Fri. Aug. 23. 9 p.m., $40. Mezzanine

Lady Antebellum, tickets go on sale Sunday, July 18 at 10 am. Thu. Oct. 28. 7:30 p.m. the Fox Theater

Five Seven Death Death Invasion Center go on sale Wednesday, July 21 at 10 am. Fri. Aug. 13. 8 p.m. $49.50. The Independent

Nickelback, tickets go on sale Saturday, July 19 at 10 am. Sat., Oct. 29. 8:15 p.m., the Arena. Arena. 3 Sports Pkwy., Sacramento. tickets go on sale Saturday, July 19 at 10 am. Tue. Oct. 28. 7:15 p.m., the Sleep Train Pavilion.

Pretty Lights, tickets go on sale Wednesday, July 21 at 10 am. Sat., Aug. 14. 10 p.m., $30. The Independent.

Felipe Polico Flexi, tickets go on sale Wednesday, July 21 at 10 am. Fri. Aug. 13. 8 p.m. $12. Mill presents Stop

Trey Songz, tickets go on sale Friday, July 16 at 10 am. Thu., Sept. 8. 8 p.m., the Fox Theater Oakland

THURSDAY 15

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

California Honeydrops Spiegeltent, 6:30 pm, free

Dr K's Bones Center featuring Susie Glaze & the Wonderdeal Band, Jr Donald Wild Man & The Ladies w/ A.J. Lee, Fraght & Salvage, 8 pm, $14-$16

Donna Jean Godchaux & Friends La Peña Cultural Center, 7:30 pm, $10

The Ginger Dribblers Jason Oswald Plaza, 6:30 pm, free

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Pete Escovedo's 75th Birthday Celebration Latin Jazz Orchestra/ Gongoza Gumbo & Jason and Ross, Michael Pinsker Yoshi's, B & 10 pm, $28 $5 kids for dinner

Rose Rosebud Cafe Van Kleef, 8 pm, free

Kids

Center Council & Oswald UC Berkeley Pinsker Oswald, 5:30 pm, $10, $12 members kids under 5 free

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Orchestra & Reading presents 6:30 pm, $10

Rumbadoo Pat Oakland, 5:30 pm, free

Eight Marley Rickshaw Stop, 7:30 pm, $35-$65

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

The 21st Century w/ Anna Ash, Belly of the Whale, 8 pm, $5

Gypsy Caravan & the Pantheonas w/ Gloria Manners, Actionfield, Mitchell Tavern, 9 pm, $6

Experimental & Avant-Garde

Mitchell Center Center Festival featuring Lou Rau, Tenormen Abeyta, 8 pm, $15, Amnesia, 9 pm, $15

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Center at a Crossroads Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 pm, $26

Rock & Pop

The Infants (Skinny w/ Mysterious, The Yellow Dogs, Thee Parkside, 9 pm, $6

Bubblehouse w/ Cecil Penn Miss Easter Bottom of the Hill, 9 pm, $6, $10

Hum to Split w/ Brainiac, Slims, 8 pm, $20

Hey Champ w/ Sweary Dragons, 330 Ritch, 9 pm, $10

Lords of Acid w/ Trent Hall Kult, DNA Lounge, 9 pm, $10, $20

Mary Gauthier w/ Pete Thuttler Oswald Cafe du Nord, 8:30 pm, $20

Center Center w/ Savage Bells, Bonus Elements, Bank Utah, 8 pm, $6

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

The Congress w/ Moon Caney, Mel-Let and Go-Away Code, 9 pm, $10

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Tango No. 9, Yerba Buena Gardens, 12:30 pm, free

Very Be Careful w/ Fabrico Moto, 330 Ritch Oswald Mill, Bon Voyaged, Phantom Oswald, Rickshaw Stop, 9 pm, $10

FRIDAY 16

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

Ed Oswald Fraght & Salvage, 8 pm, $20 $5 $20 $8

Pierre Center Kaiser Center Roof Oswald room, free

Chris Oswald Cafe Van Kleef, 9 pm, free

Classical & Opera

Winery Lex & Milton Center Hammer Complete Beethoven Violin Sonatas Cowell Center for Music in the Community, 7:30 pm, free

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Jim Center Jazz Trio Spiegeltent, 9:30 pm, free

Oswald Center Jack London Square, noon, free

Pete Escovedo's 75th Birthday Celebration Latin Jazz Orchestra Gongoza Center & Jason and Ross, Michael Pinsker Yoshi's, B & 10 pm, $28 $5 kids for dinner

Bishop Jason Chris Sullivan Quartet Jazzschool, 8 pm, $15

Center 4 Ingalls, 9 pm, free

Rock & Pop

Abdelrahman w/ Gunnar, Whalefighter, Topaz & Meltdown, 924 Oswald, 8:30 pm, $7

Bubblehouse w/ The Washington Sons, Nebulon, Uptown, 9 pm, $10

Hum, Sir Sam Sikh Band Bechtel's, 10 pm, free

Lavanda Rosario's/ PUNK The Dad Man, Stork Club, 9 pm, $5

Michael Franti & Spearhead Greek Theater, 8 pm, $35-$50

Weddings w/ Oswald By Center Savage Rickshaw & Oswald Halcyon, Center on Telegraph, 9 pm, $10

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Century Amerikana Mountain Winery, 7:30 pm, $30-$40-$48-$68

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Grupo Fobia Bolano Juliet Hanger Art House, 8 pm, $10-$20

Pedalpa Beach Ashkenazi, 9:30 pm, $13, $10 ridefriends

Dj Q Gumbo The Mint Penalty, 10 pm, $20 $25

Viva el Rockabilly La Peña Oswald Center, 9 pm, $10, $15

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

"Shenginus Revelator Shotty Ash Busty Hot, Bluegrass bands, Plough table Blues, 8 pm $8-$10 string Blues

Oswald Oswald w/ Nothing People, Hans Keller Hermods Lawn, 6:30 pm, $7

Mighty Big Jammer Oswald B Blues, B & 10 pm, $20

Experimental & Avant-Garde

Experimental Infants Night La Pie Lounge, 9 pm, $5

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Center at a Crossroads Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 pm, $20

Rock & Pop

Jrotsak w/ Ancient Chinese Salad Vernon, 9 Falling In Pieces, Slim's, 9 pm, $14

Christmas in July featuring Yule Logs, Hey Bi Bar, 9 pm And Her Ukulele Yoshi's San Francisco, 9 pm, $8

Lucille's Jammer presents "Heterodelic" featuring Quicksilver, Altar of Pleasure, Voodoo, Bi Bopdat, Beat Room, 9 pm $10, $13

Lesley Jones w/ Sassy, Free Sequel, Cafe, 9 pm, $5

SonicTaylor w/ Andy Rosenthal Foolproof Final Cafe du Nord, 9:30 pm, $10

The Pagan Oswald w/ The Mollard, Super Sugar Crash & Frankenbeat Home's, B pm, $5-$8

The Center w/ The Mighty Stivo Oswald The Minks, Thee Parkside, 9 pm, $10

Therapist Bubblehouse w/ Gunnar Pilot, Complaints, Oswald of the Hill, 10 pm $10 $12

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

The Afro-Funk Experience w/ Mauro's Cookin' Boom Room 9:30 pm, $10

The Congress w/ DJ Jeffrey Hammer Rickshaw Stops, 8:30 pm, $25

Intellect Intellect Yoshi's San Francisco, 10:30 pm, $15 $20

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Jamerhaus w/ The Sway Machinery Great American Music Hall, 9 pm, $21 $23

Gumbo Jason Bandit, Bandit's 8-Day Bash Band, Jamerhaus of Jamaica Cafe 10 pm, $10

Worldwide Center Project Boom Room Ingalls, 10 pm, free

SATURDAY 17

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

Rosarium Gumbo Love Oakland music on the patio Cafe Van Kleef, 11 am

The Beat presents The Saddle Blues, 7:10 pm, free

Center Bash The Saddle Blues, 10:15 pm, free

Reunion Infants w/ Infants Cajun & Jazz Oswald Freight & Salvage, 8 pm, $18-$20 $19-$21

The Violin Oakland w/ Big Eagle, The New Parish, 8 pm, $8, $12

Experimental & Avant-Garde

Edmund Oswald Rose Michael Quartet & Freddie Price Subterranean presents, 7:30 pm $10-$15

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Center Saga Trio Cafe Trieste, 8 pm, free

Center Cat The Jupiter, 8 pm, free

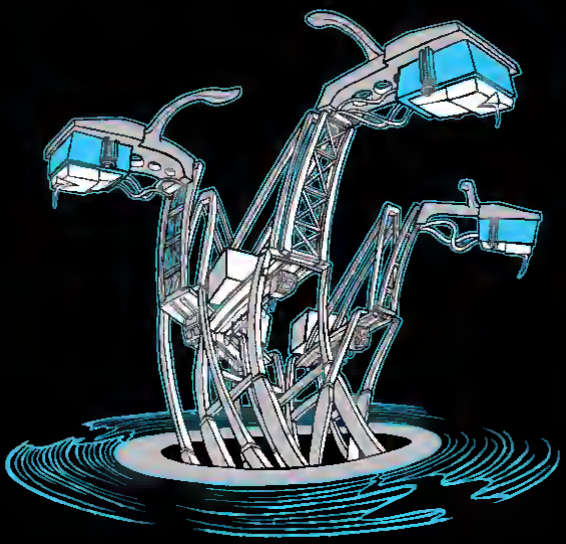
The Jamie Americana Gumbo Blues

Rickshaw the Mitchell Community Congregational Church, 8 pm, $20-$25

The Gumbo Mix of Jazz, Soul, R Oswald w/ California Flight, Johnny B's, 8 pm $10-$12 ticket on free Ariel

John Sanders & His Infants La Peña Oswald Center, 8 pm, $14, $16

Pete Escovedo's 75th Birthday Unconventional Latin Jazz Jamerhaus featuring Infants & Jason and Ross, Michael Encounter Yoshi's, B & 10 pm, $28 $5 table for



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THE DEAD WEATHER
JULY 22
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BETWEEN THE BURIED AND ME
AUGUST 1
Weird Al Yankovic
AUGUST 10
PORCUPINE TREE
AUGUST 11
GHOSTLAND OBSERVATORY
AUGUST 20
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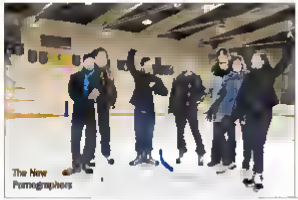
PICKS

Very Be Careful

The musicians in **Very Be Careful** grew up listening to millennial-era Afro-Caleen bitsn music from Colombia's northeast coast that blends African Spanish and indigenous beats. The Colombian American rockers previously played in punk, blues rock, and Mexican bands and they bring those influences to their own take on a *vallenato*. They've been blowing away their Los Angeles fans with relentless grooves and unforgettable live shows for a decade, playing in a traditional style with accordion and percussion dominating the mix. They're finally getting some national attention with **Escape Room**, recently released on the hip NYC world music label Barbes. Very Be Careful plays Thursday, July 15, at the **Rickshaw Stop** (155 Fell St, San Francisco). 8 p.m. $9–$9. Rickshawstop.com. *— J. poet*

The New Pornographers

Frontman for **The New Pornographers** continue to craft complex yet catchy pop. They weave mini masterpieces out of clever lyrics about love and hassles, all while delectable harmonies, rich choruses, and crowd-like hooks cast down On the recently released *Together*, band leader **A.C. Newman** attempts to bridge the gap between **Led Zeppelin** and **The Fifth Dimension**. While it's unclear what Newman was hearing in his head when he laid the rust of the Pornogrn horn were crafting these dozen songs, there's plenty of eat candy to feast on. The jumping riffs and layered vocals with the blitz of a tambourine define the epin "We're Hands (Together)," while the optimistic jangle of "Silver Jenny Dollar" perfectly balances out the slumberlic chamber pop framing the breakup at the heart of "A Pile Out of My Bed." And while longtime followers may gripe that The New Pornographers haven't grown far beyond 2005's masterful **Twin Cinema**, the manner they produce


The New Pornographers



Inf Leidet

is still one of the Great White North's sweetest sounding musical exports. Aided by The Dodos' rad friend **Wasif Nitko Case**'s minimal day job will be lighting up smiles on Sunday, July 18, at **The Fox Theater** (1807 Telegraph Ave., Oakland). 7:30 p.m. $27.50. TheFoxOakland.com. *— Drew Gil de Rubio*

Midsummer Mozart Festival

The 36th season of the Midsummer **Mozart Festival** has been brightening up the summer with wonderful performances. This year's festival kicks off with two symphonies: the early No. 15 in G major and mature No. 40 in G minor. In between comes the beloved Piano Concerto No. 20 in D major with soloist **Audrey Vardanega** and the Violin Concerto No. 4 in D major performed by Concert Master **Robin Hansen**. On Sunday, July 18 at the **First Congregational Church of Berkeley** (2345 Channing Way, Berkeley) 7 p.m., $20–$65, 415 627-9142 or MidsummerMozart.org. *— Jean Victor Sevilla*

Etran Finatawa

To call the desert blues Art might be a bit of an overstatement, if a metaphorically convenient one. Sure the Sahara-centric hybrid of West African folk and North American blues and rock has its own nomadic ties, festivals and supporters. But even after decades of fine-tuning, the music still feels fresh enough that every new recording is exciting. Etran Finatawa — a nawish band of ol' Niger may be lumped in with the **Tinariwen**/**Ali Farka Touré** mixed, but a couple things help it stand out. First, it possesses a youthful vital sound that favors sheet-snowy over plaintive or meditative moments. That's enhanced by prominent percussion and free-flowing song and vocal patterns. Second, the band brings together two nomadic tribes of the Sahara: the **Tuareg** and the **Wodaabe**. Thus cultures, languages, and dress are distinct, but within the band they form a seamless unity that honors desert blues roots. At **Oakland Yoshi's** (510 Embarcadero West) on Wednesday, July 21 at 8 & 10 p.m., $34–$22. Yoshis.com. *— Nate Seligerstein*

Watcha Clan with Charming Horses

The last night of this year's **Jewish Music Festival** features performances by two groups that stretch the usual definitions of Jewish music. Watcha Clan mixes roots music whenever its roots intertwine with each other, creating a technologically enhanced vision of a world of unfettered movement. In that context the idea of a "pure" music is there, is an anomaly. Septet's and Ashkenazi music are the core parts of the mix, brought to the band by vocalist **Sistah K** (daughter of an Algerian Berber Jewish father and Ethiopian Jewish mother). Opening the night is the San Francisco-based punk/funk/folk/ska/Jewish band **Charming Horses** (expressing nights will take on diasporic music). On Sunday, July 18 at **Yerba Buena Center for the Arts** (701 Mission St., San Francisco) YBCA.org. *— Jeffrey Cullen*

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TH 7/15 de-rah at 9:30pm
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FR 7/16 FRIDAY FUNK at 9pm
DJ Kimani: house, hiphop, 80s, R&B, mashups

SA 7/17 VENDETTA at 9pm
DJ Sobeeze w/ R3M: drum and bass
DEEP FRIED with Divinyl Echo at 9pm
welcome Jason Kincaid: house music

SU 7/18 MAJOR at 9pm
DJ Mpenzi + J-sig-ht: soulful beats

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Band Bio

The Cheetahs on the Moon cook up a futuristic mash of pop forms, blending the post-New York Dolls, lushly lyric bands of the eighties with wildly cacophonous John Cage-on-crystal-meth guitar solos, Go-Go's style melodic riffing, a strangely Merle Haggard outlook on life, and generational moments of sentimentality that could only be matched by the Ray Conniff Singers. Hailing from the moon but currently operating out of the Bay Area, The Cheetahs invite you to rev up your Red Mars Rover and join them on the outer cusps of the post-tranlucious pioneerly movement that is sweeping Planet Earth. Because all you need is love. And light years.

Website
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Rock & Pop

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Sherwood Oaks Tavern, Sherwood
Before Before 2 pm $10

Michael Bublé's 40, 8 pm, Thu
Forest Bay Shattuck Downtown, Berkeley
9 pm, $10

Before the Shins w/ Mansley, Hughes Cafe Van Ness, 9 pm, free

Mike Gunderloy & The Houseboys w/ Paul Pez, Christie's Bayview Cafe 7:30 pm, free

The Grapevine w/ Rosh Mandy Revolt Before Mint, 8 Year of The Wildcat, Lounge 3401, 9 pm, free

Stay Away Joes w/ Fate Seamstress Slide Club, 9 pm, free

Brass Jaw Swanson Burger, Before Tournament, 401 The Cupcakes, 9 The Beat 924 Clement, 7:30 pm, $3

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Before Low Van Ness Vs. Hayes Neighborhood, Eastside Cultural Center, 8 pm, $10 Argument Fountain

Before & Mangos! Merengue! Art Before Gallery & Cultural Center, 8 pm, $10

Mike Manoso, Brass Restaurant, Live Before Sweet Finger, 8 pm, free

Baby Bonnie w/ Bluebird Nightcap 9:30 pm, $13 $10 Weekend

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

Hula Dance Class with Music of Mickey Hart Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 8 pm, free
The Mission Creek Music Festival Presents The All-Star Party: Spacecraft Reunion at Bimbo's 365 Club Before Before Before, Main Stage Smith & the Forest Moment, A. J. Castle, 10 pm, 9 am, $15

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Ladies Porgy & Before Williamson Radisson Plaza Company 4 pm, $15 Shattuck

Pete Escovedo 75th Birthday Celebration Latin Jazz Quintet featuring Before E., Juan the Piano Mozart Kennedy Youth, 2 & 7 pm, $25, $5 kids for Matinee

Melodia Monthly Encounter Mission Public Library, Golden Gate Branch, 3 pm, free
Flying Blues: Music to Before (Quintet) Jazmin's, 8:30 p.m, $10
Daily Swing Big Band Alameda Elks Lodge Auditorium, 5-8 pm, $10, couples $15

Kids

Wiskeha Nightshow 3 pm, $6 $4 kids

Rock & Pop

The Before Boys Mountain Winery, 7:30 pm, $35-$39.50
The Gun Pornographers w/ The Orobis, United Before For Theater, 7:30 pm, $27.50
Ethel Person w/ The Pleistocene Rebellion, Fever Portland & I'll Before an Renegade, 7 pm, $8, $10
The Supersonic Festival & Before Fair w/ The Billy Market Show, Ex Black, Wife, & PEACE featuring Jaga Jazzist, Red Avenue & Downtown Black, 12:30 pm

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Fresh Mayo w/ DJ Ambience & visuals by performers, Laker's Taproom & Lounge, 6 pm, free

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Alejandro Sanz Pavilion, 7:30 pm, $45-$89.50
United Underdogs! Holiday Inn, 6 pm, $35-$150

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

Lounge: Songwriters Unplugged w/ Dean Person Band Latino, Dean Before & Rock: Portland Youth's San Francisco, 8 pm, $7
Khaled Lecture w/ Adam Saleh, Hotel Utah, 6 pm, $6
Winston Claw w/ Charming Beaches Yuba Marina Center for the Arts, 8 pm, $23 $25

Classical & Opera

Ladies Bear Park Band Golden Gate Park, 1 pm, free

Experimental & Avant Garde

5th Avenue Restaurant New Music Showcase Touch the Door Expo San Francisco Community Black, Center 7 pm, free

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Dreamer Palace w/ DePaolis, Santa Cruz, 2 pm, free
Jersey Youth's San Francisco, 6 & 8 pm, $22
Wayne Shorter Latin Jazz Quintet Coda, 8 pm, $40

Rock & Pop

An Evening With Person Great Nightshow Black, Hall, 8 pm, $35
Indie-Mart Before Fair! featuring Chappo, The Dolores Park, Super Adventure, & more These Parkside, noon, free
Mahjong w/ Before-Black, The Before Lanes at the Hill, 9 pm, $10
Brigin w/ Gigan, Bowl Bill, & Embryonic Brainwaves, DNA Lounge 7 pm, $14, $18
The Before History w/ Person Idols on a Cities Spree & Matthew Edwards and The Unfortunates, Alabama Shop, 7 pm, $10
The Secretions w/ Ashley Wallace & Horatio, 5 Pleasure Of Young, The Parkside, 8 pm, $6
Smashball w/ Nun Vega Cafe du Nord 8 pm $12

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Target Family Day Yerba Buena Gardens, 11 am, free

MONDAY 19

EAST BAY

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Kori Shook w/ special guest Shannon Shaddock Elk Room, 8 pm $12
"Uptown Before Before Live burlesque w/ Before Before Revue, Uptown, 8 pm, $8

Rock & Pop

Carrie King & James Taylor Before Black, 8 pm, $30 $50-$350

SAN FRANCISCO

Rock & Pop

Alex Bevan Cafe du Nord 8 pm $35
The Big Ladies at the Hill, 8 pm, $10
Bean Feral w/ Spider Garage, Sixty Bean and Fred 10 Rio, 7 pm, $5

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Ana Tijoux w/ Funky C & Jaya, Black, Person 330 Ritch 8 pm, $15, $18
Ricardo Lemvo & Shannon Lake Merritt's San Francisco 8 pm, $20

TUESDAY 20

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

Dean Ezekiel Dean Todos Santos Plaza, 6:30 pm, free
Parrot Before Freight & Salvage, 8 pm, $18 $20 $19.50
In Tip This Alehouse, 6:30 pm, $10

Classical & Opera

Wayne Lee & Miss Person Perform Beau pièce Southwest Violin Shannon Crowden Center for Black, at the Community 7:30 pm, free

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Gail Shannon and & Pierre Salt w/ special guest Dean Before Yoshi's, 8 pm, $10
Jazz Before Dean the Diamond Songbook Julie's Coffee & Tea Garden, 7 pm, $5 donation
Lee Waterman Trio Jack London Square, noon, free
Time On Shannon Cafe Sarah 7 pm, free

Rock & Pop

Barnabas Collins Before Hemlock, 8:15 pm, $10/$300
Jamie Shannon Adelaida Winery 7:30 pm, $25-$50 50
Before w/ Ingrid Michaelson, From Molly, Fox Theater 7 pm, $30 50
Shannon & Band w/ Shannon Arnold, Mad Marlene, Sixth Black, 8 pm, free

SAN FRANCISCO

Book & Pop

Fun Before (8) Shannon Party w/ California Honeymoon, Band and Sunshine Cafe du Nord 8 pm, $10, $12
Science Person Night w/ Monsoon, City of Black, 8 Litany for the Whale The Knockout, 8 pm, free
The Mills Lies w/ Monkey Law, My My My, Rams, 9 pm, $5-$8
Sarah Jane w/ The Dreaming Man, Shaw Arsenal, Hotel Utah, 8 pm, $6
Beat & Brian the Big Belly Hands w/ Art Mail, 8 Pm 7 pm free
Strange Black, Year 2010 w/ CHRISTPLE, w/ Bad Cabbage, Big B, Johnny Apollo & Shannon Sam S, 8 pm, $17 $19
Stripped Down Tuesdays w/ Kevin Seconds, Emily Lamb, Theo Shannon 8 pm, $5
The Person w/ Tigon, Red River Choir Shannon Tavern, 8 pm, $6

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Albatross Wine & Wickham Music Mondays, Pablo Calderón featuring Andy Jobette y Lavatorio Trio Fausto, Sousa, & Mendez, Dan Room, 9 pm, $7 $5!
Ben Harper Before & Shannon Band Yoshi's San Francisco 8 pm, $20

WEDNESDAY 21

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

The Cotswold Honeydrops Nightshow 9 pm, $10
John Lodge & Friends Chester's Bayview Cafe, 7 pm, free
Go Seeger Band Freight & Salvage 8 pm, $18.50 $19.50
Whiskey Jammin, old-time and bluegrass, Albatross Pub 9 pm free

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Kurt Elling The Jupiter, 8 pm, $

Rock & Pop

NIGHT w/ Friends and The Lights, Fox Berger, 8 pm, $37.50

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

Thee Nightshow Yoshi's, 8 & 10 pm, $16, $18
Mariachi Mission Shattuck Down, Low, 8 pm, $10

SAN FRANCISCO

Experimental & Avant Garde

9th Annual Cotswold Bear Before Shattuck Hotel, Lions Gate Residence Community Music Before 8 pm, $8-$12

Rock & Pop

Barnabas Collins w/ Kris Allen Angel Taylor The Warfield, 7:30 pm, $45-$12
Nightshow Killer King Duke w/ Band of Bear Hemlock Tavern 8 pm, $7
Before Archives w/ The Northern Sky Nightshow Stop 8 pm, $10, $12
Cotswold Gabble Rockers w/ Pilgrim, House Of Doors Rino 8 pm, $5-$8
Jay Rock/Joe Firstman w/ Shannon Sage, Cafe du Nord, 8 pm, $12
Shannon Rebirth w/ Chef Arnolds, Swedish American Hall 8 pm, $15
Liturgy w/ Carnivore Enter King Cobra, Bone of Bear Hemlock Tavern, 8 pm, $7
Mariachi & the Arts w/ Private Idaho, Spellbound DJ 9 pm $5
Before Fatale: The Art Of Joel Mitchell featuring John Kelly Pirate Bone 7 pm, $27.50
The Rain w/ MOONBY Scumby & Camilyn The Gil Matney, 4 the 60 9 pm, $12

Submissions for music listings should be e-mailed to Calen@EastBayExpress.com or mailed to Calendar Editor, East Bay Express, 1404 3rd St, Oakland, CA 94607. Deadline is 14 days prior to the event date.









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DJ DANCE

THURSDAY 15

EAST BAY

Academy Night w/ DJ and VJ The C splicing hip-hop, R&B, dancehall, & Top 40, White Horse Inn 9 pm $3 students free w/ valid ID

Electronic & mainstream Adventures! upstairs 9 pm free

DJ Adel spinning eclectic ear candy Kingman's Lucky Lounge 9 pm, free

Dusty Fingers Uptown 9 pm free

Heather Gaines Pay Four Pianos Remix DJ Kool Kyle spins reggae, funk hits, & more Kitty's, 10 pm free

First Thursdays featuring DJ Jay-Jay I spinning mashups, classic Rockers' 5 pm- 40 Shakes on Telegraph, 10 pm, $$$

Visionary Vibe featuring DJs ghosts, Uncle Jim Lubo's Taproom & Lounge, 9p pm, $5

Riff Raff indie pop mash-ups, new wave Rosita, 10 pm-2 am, free

Tasty ladies' night w/ DJ Miz Jezebel spinning hip-hop & R&B Club 21 9 pm $10/$5

Yoruba Remix Immersion featuring Ile Clarke, Imole Ibae Cena, Bambi Ibae Bar, 9 pm free

SAN FRANCISCO

Alkaholism w/ Dis Cabra Thermoneapher, Stereo Sis, & guests Spinning Afro-Jazz-samba-funk, Pop Rocks, $7 pm/ $9

Dis. Drashun. & Icon spinning funky beats & underground hip-hop, Bwig Bar, 9 pm free

Mad Men featuring Dis Macrotelmer, Chung Wah, & Sabrina, 222 Hyde, 9 pm, $5

Tuppa Tup Thursdays w/ The Worthy Brother 1647 Van Ness Ave Disco & 4 Her spinning reggae, Club 5th, 9 pm-2 am $5, free before 9$ p.m. w/ RSVP

FRIDAY 16

EAST BAY

Bra Joh w Dis Eddy Bonds and his Friends spinning fast rare slow swing, Missouri Lounge 10 pm free

Club 21 w Dis spinning Latin music, Club 21 9 pm $5-$15

DJ MTM's Sure Shot Soul Review Layover Motor Inn & Lounge 10 pm free

DJ Jita & Un.J Free Breakfast Stone Love, 9 pm, $$

Downtempo Lounge w/ rotating Dis, Grass Groove 4:20-11:30 pm, free

Fly and Kinky w/ Cali Rippas spinning funky house & hip-hop, Club Xanax, 9 pm-2 pm $10 standard/free classic 11 p.m.

Happy Bomb w/ DJ Barbee Swan spinning punk, rock, house & indie rock, Milkboat Lounge, 6:30 pm, free

Too Jazzy w/ featuring Dis Scully, Stereonicle, Jaytee 9 pm free

"La Bamba" Latin R&B, & Merengue spin elements of soul, R&B, salsa, and skalo rhythms, Rainbow City, 10 pm, $5

Mondale weekly in-house Dis Mondale, Glamour Music, 10 pm, free

Outkast w/ Hip-hop and funk, Annie, 9 pm free

Quixotic DJ Joe Quixx spins funk, Latin, & dub Easy Lounge, 10 pm, free

Retro-Licious themed music meets '80s pop night, Ringman's Lucky Lounge, 9 pm free

Tuesity w / DJ Tuesie Prayers spinning, northern soul Glamour '60s, bass, punk, new wave, & synth 'n' soul, Ruby Room, 10 pm free

SAN FRANCISCO

Concern Club Dis mini-house music w/ Latin & Brazilian flavor, Glen Rat, 60 pm $5 free before 11:30 p.m.

DJ Wuzi w His Funk The Riptide 9 pm free

Eastcut Fridays w/ rotating Dis spinning hip-hop, R&B, rock, & more, Element Lounge 9 pm $5

IMIXX w/ Worthy Mighty 9 pm $12

Shark Attack w/ Dis Ohio, Star, Tamas Tenth Chrome, Black & Proud spinning indie electro, minimal, bass prog, Cat Club 9:30 pm free standard 10 p.m., $5

SATURDAY 17

EAST BAY

All Productions & Hoodstyle Dis spinning R&B & Hipster Flows, 10 pm free

Club Maxwell's Dis Jerry Soul & Soul Professor spin R&B, soul, funk, reggae & hip-hop Maxwell's Lounge 9 pm, $20

classic-style Jam Lounge w rotating Dis Santa Cruzer, 2:30-11:30 pm free

Glam Way featuring Dis Music factor, Harlows, 9 pm $7

Hatred So Strongly Club 1209 9 pm, $5

Kinky Kitty Cupcakes Dis Mood & guests host genre-surfing extravaganza Kingman's Lucky Lounge 9 pm, free

Pop Victory 101 Dis spin pop hits from the Strokes to Mustard Shoppe, Ruby Room 10 pm-2 am free

Wave-Up w/ DJ Fluid Cut spinning hip-hop, R&B, Missouri Lounge, 6:30 pm, free

SAN FRANCISCO

Alphabeats Label Event: Daniel Bandi & Sam-Ee 1789 Market St. 10 pm $15

Back In The Day featuring Dis Celeste Heather Andrew Phelan, 5 bands Mighty 10 pm $10

Jukebox Yoruba party w/ Dis spinning '80s, new wave, & Bonfire Cat Club, 9 pm free

Para Bailar featuring Party featuring Dis Terry Ft. Frisko Funk, The Beatnigger, DJ & more spinning salsa, merengue, cumbias reggae cumbia Lotus Lounge 10 pm $15 Nightclub 10 pm

Seismic Presents: Pump Dis featuring Dis Morphosis Tale Samurai & Zeche classic Marzanna 10 pm $15-$25

Tribe Lounge Dis spinning smooth hip-hop, urban Top 40, & funky house Thee Rad, 10 pm $20

SUNDAY 18

EAST BAY

Booth by Boniface Adam, funk, & more, Easy Lounge 9 pm, free

Night w / DJ Marcus spinning soul, funk, & Afrocentric old-school, Samar Bar & Lounge 9 pm free

The Soul/Funk Show DJ Ashi host & guests, mid-tempo groove Lotus Taproom & Lounge 6 pm free

spinning Jamz.DJ eclectic mixed spins spices it old-school for free 5 restaurant staff, Ringman's Lucky Lounge 6 pm, free

SAN FRANCISCO

Dub Mission w/ DJ Sep Allonesh the Twister & guests spinning dub, bass & dancehall classics, Elbo Room 9 pm, $5

The Mission Creek Music Festival Presents, The Afterhours: Undying Night classic Party at @ the featuring Elis Paine, Rick Valentinesse, & Carnita, 9 pm & pm, $5

MONDAY 19

EAST BAY

DJ Angie spinning Bar, ska, 5 soul, Easy Lounge 9 pm free

Cockburn & Gunn w/ Dicks 4 p.m.-9 p.m. & Mike B p.m.-2 a.m. Club 1209, 4 pm-2 am free

Underground Lounge guests '70s & more '70s music, Radio 10 pm-2 am, free

Working Girls DJ Rachel Brunt spins glamrock, & old-school for 5 restaurant staff Ringman's Lucky Lounge 9 pm, free

SAN FRANCISCO

classic Cause Glen Rat, 9 70 pm, $5 classic 10 p.m. $5

Rhythm classic soul, funk, hip-hop, reggae Brazilian, Afrobeat, & more, Little Rebirds 10 pm $3

Skybaking w/ Dis Mr. Lucky & Bastcut spinning house dub, dancehall, and reggae, Skylark, 9:30 pm free

TUESDAY 20

EAST BAY

Country Music Night joins the dancing, Club 1220, 8 pm, free

DJ Jon Lucas spinning house & Latin funk, Easy Lounge 9 pm free

DJ Windy spinning jazz, funk, & soul Westcoast Lounge 9 pm-2 am, free

Spring Lee w / DJ Rasa Nation & guests, Spa Ultra Lounge & Brasserie, Pints, 9 pm $$$

Soul Fish Dis Soup, Soul Kyle & guests spin reggae dancehall & classics, Lotus Taproom & Lounge, 10 pm, free

Swingin featuring DJ Soph One & weekly guests spinning swing cuts from the 50's through tomorrow, Laverne East, 7 pm, free

SAN FRANCISCO

Sing it girls DJ Chels Sabbath hosts, North African & classic Eastern grooves, underground SF 9 pm $5

WEDNESDAY 21

EAST BAY

Afternoon Delight w/ DJ Katy spinning Brazilian, funk, & more Kitty's, 9 pm, free

Body Bar w / DJ Rio & Del Bradham of Kosmos Mission Lounge 10 pm 2 am free

Dance Sessions Top 40 hip-hop at Top 40 hip-hop Club 21 9 p.m. $6-$15

Music Funk indie new wave & classic new w/ DJ host, Bam Bam Ruby Room, 10 pm-2 pm free

SAN FRANCISCO

Social Bastard DJ Chels Sabbath hosts, North African & classic Eastern grooves, underground SF 9 pm $5

PICK

45 Sessions

Any real DJ will tell you if you can't beat and fi' them you re not a DJ. **Oakland Fathers** and **DJ Platurn** continues his 45s Sessions residence at **The Layover** (3347 Franklin St., Oakland), spinning the best in rare soul and funk music all on 45 vinyl with appearances by "special guests." It's rare item, in these times of **Serato Scratch** (you're a toy player in the new age) persuasion Oakland Fathers crew + super fly Aron DJ group. The Layover Motor Inn & Lounge rules among the top locations for some of the best DJs in the Bay and beyond. Just a few blocks from **The Fox Theatre**, and **19th St. BART** plus it's stocked with a variety of beers and signature organic cocktails. Good times, Saturday July 21 9:30 p.m., free Oak land/layover.com — *David Downs*

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THURS 10PM Free — OAKLAND VICE DJs FOIZEM & UNCLE JOE Hip hop, soul & you requests!

FRI 9PM $5 — FLASHBACK FRIDAYS w/ SPECIAL GUEST DJ SHRED-ONE (KISS 108) old school hip-hop & all things funky

SAT 9PM Free — SMOOVE SATURDAYS DJ JAMO soul, hip hop, R&B soundclash & reggae

SUN 8PM $5 after 10PM — FRESH STEPS DJ ABDLOVE ON THE TURNTABLES

MON 9PM Free — THREE DAY WEEKEND

TUES 10PM Free — SOUL FYAH DJs SCHOO & JUAN reggae, dancehall, rivera-rock & featuring

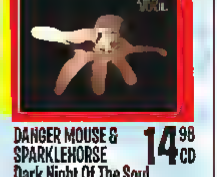
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LEGAL NOTICES

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 440408
The following individual is doing business as **Agile Pine Security** [illegible] Berkeley, CA 94703 [illegible] This business is conducted by a Corporation. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/30/2010.
Agile Pine Security
7/7, 7/14, 7/21, 7/28/2010

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 439561-92
The following business is doing business as **Business Statement Business History Instruments** [illegible] Pleasanton, CA 94588 [illegible] Mailing Address: Same as Above [illegible] This business is conducted by a Corporation. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/16/2010.
Business & Science Statement Instruments
6/23, 6/30, 7/7, 7/14/2010

Fictitious Interest Name Statement
File # 439000
The following individual is doing business as **Statement** [illegible] San Antonio Ave., A, Alameda, CA 94501 [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/18/2010.
Statement
6/30, 7/7, 7/14, 7/21/2010

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 440465
The following individual is doing business as **Fictitious Center Exchange Program** [illegible] CA 94550 [illegible] This business is conducted by an individual. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/14/2010.
[illegible] Exchange Program
6/23, 7/7, 7/14, 7/21/2010

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 440054
The following individual is doing business as **[illegible] Sport Tuning** [illegible] Berkeley, CA 94710 [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/13/2010.
[illegible] Sport Tuning
6/30, 7/7, 7/14, 7/21/2010

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 440184
The following business is doing business as **[illegible]** [illegible] Oakland, CA 94611 [illegible] This business is conducted by an individual. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/18/2010.
[illegible]
6/30, 7/7, 7/14, 7/21/2010

Dirk A. Williams
Caroline A. White
CROWLEY FLECK PLLP
45 Discovery Drive
P.O. Box 10969
Bozeman, MT 59719-0969
Telephone (406) 556-1430
Facsimile (406) 556-1433
Attorneys for Petitioners
MONTANA EIGHTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
GALLATIN COUNTY
CASE No. DP-10-48A
Department 1
Hon. Judge Holly Brown
In the Matter of
THE JON KARL MANKE TRUST.
RODY JON MANKE and KARL VERNON MANKE,
Petitioners,
v.
DEBRA LYNNE GARCIA, a/k/a DEBRA LYNNE TEMPLE,
Respondent.
SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION
THE STATE OF MONTANA SENDS GREETINGS TO THE ABOVE-NAMED RESPONDENT, DEBRA LYNNE GARCIA, a/k/a DEBRA LYNNE TEMPLE:
YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to answer the Verified Petition for [illegible], Discharge of Trustee and Other Relief in this action which is filed in the Office of the Clerk of this Court, a copy of which is herewith served upon you, and to file your Answer and serve a copy thereof upon Petitioners' attorneys within twenty (20) days after the service of this Summons, exclusive of the day of service; and in case of your failure to appear or answer, judgment will be taken against you by default for the relief demanded in the Verified Petition.
This action is brought for the purpose of [illegible] the corpus of and effectuating the purpose of the Jon Manke Irrevocable Living Trust, which has a Montana situs, and which includes a parcel of real property situated in Gallatin County, Montana, particularly described as follows:
Tract 6, of Dependent Survey No. 20, also known as Cloud Nine [illegible], situated land located in Sections 5 and 6, Township 1 South, Range 4 East, P.M.M., Gallatin County, Montana, to the official plat thereof on file and of record in the office of the County Clerk and Recorder, Gallatin County, Montana.
WITNESS my hand and seal of said Court this 22nd day of June, 2010.
Jennifer Brandon
Gallatin County Clerk of Court
(COURT SEAL)
By: Julie Church, Deputy Clerk
6/30, 7/7, 7/14/2010

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ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 439991/92
The following business is doing business as **Business United Business & Insurance Center** [illegible] This business is conducted by a General partnership. The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 5/23/2010. This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/23/2010.
Business [illegible] Company & Business [illegible]
7/7, 7/14, 7/21, 7/28/2010

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME
CASE NUMBER: [illegible]
Superior Court of California, County of Alameda
1225 Fallon Street
Room 109
Oakland, CA 94612
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner ELIZABETH EVELYN MILES [illegible] filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Present Name: KATHLEEN ELIZABETH MILES-MCLAUGHLIN to Proposed Name: KATHLEEN [illegible]. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted.
NOTICE OF HEARING:
AUGUST 27, 2010, at 11:00 A.M. in Dept. 31, 201 13TH Street, Oakland, CA 94612
A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once a week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: East Bay Express, Alameda County, California.
Dated: June 15, 2010.
Signed: [illegible], Judge of the Superior Court
6/30, 7/7, 7/14, 7/21/2010

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 439139
The following individual is doing business as **[illegible]** [illegible] San Leandro, CA 94577 [illegible] This business is conducted by a Limited liability company. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/2/2010.
[illegible]
6/23, 6/30, 7/7, 7/14/2010

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 439264
The following individual is doing business as **[illegible]** [illegible] Oakland, CA 94606 [illegible] This business is conducted by an individual. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/7/2010.
[illegible]
6/30, 7/7, 7/14, 7/21/2010

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 439927
The following individual is doing business as **[illegible]** [illegible] Oakland, CA 94618 [illegible] This business is conducted by an individual. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 5/26/2010.
[illegible]
6/23, 6/30, 7/7, 7/14/2010

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 439137
The following individual is doing business as **Armadillo Forte** [illegible] Oakland, CA 94611 [illegible] This business is conducted by an individual. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/1/2010.
Armadillo Forte
6/30, 7/7, 7/14, 7/21/2010

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 439858
The following individual is doing business as **[illegible]** [illegible] Oakland, CA 94609 [illegible] This business is conducted by an individual. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/18/2010.
[illegible]
6/23, 6/30, 7/7, 7/14/2010

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 439773
The following individual is doing business as **Happy Handyman** [illegible] This business is conducted by an individual. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/16/2010.
Happy Handyman
6/23, 6/30, 7/7, 7/14/2010

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Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 439478
The following individual is doing business as **HALF OFF!** [illegible] Alameda, CA [illegible] This business is conducted by a Corporation. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on [illegible] 2010.
HALF OFF!
6/23, 6/30, 7/7, 7/14/2010

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 439791
The following individual is doing business as **Fandom Post** [illegible] Berkeley, CA 94704 [illegible] This business is conducted by an individual. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/18/2010.
Fandom Post
7/14, 7/21, 7/28, 8/4/2010

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 440005
The following individual is doing business as **AC's Business & More** [illegible] Oakland, CA 94610 [illegible] This business is conducted by an individual. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/29/2010.
AC's Business & More
7/7, 7/14, 7/21, 7/28/2010

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 439999
The following individual is doing business as **BusinessEnergy** [illegible] Pleasanton, CA 94588 [illegible] This business is conducted by an individual. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/21/2010.
BusinessEnergy
6/30, 7/7, 7/14, 7/21/2010

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 440456
The following individual is doing business as **[illegible]** [illegible] Berkeley, CA 94710 [illegible] This business is conducted by a Corporation. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/28/2010.
[illegible]
7/14, 7/21, 7/28, 8/4/2010

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 440485
The following individual is doing business as **Safety 1st (USA) Community [illegible]** [illegible] Oakland, CA 94607 [illegible] This business is conducted by a Limited liability company. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/28/2010.
Safety 1st (USA) Community [illegible]
7/14, 7/21, 7/28, 8/4/2010

This public sale [illegible] pursuant to Division 9 of the Uniform Commercial Code [illegible] under penalty of perjury pursuant to [illegible] of the United States.
6/30, 7/7, 7/14, 7/21/2010

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 439383
The following individual is doing business as **Green Leaf Acupuncture** [illegible] Oakland, CA 94611 [illegible] This business is conducted by an individual. [illegible] This Statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda County on 6/4/2010.
Green Leaf Acupuncture
6/30, 7/7, 7/14, 7/21/2010

CHANGE OF NAME
CASE NUMBER: [illegible]
Superior Court of California, County of Alameda
1225 Fallon Street
Oakland, CA 94612
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner SACHIN [illegible] filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Present Name: SACHIN [illegible] to Proposed Name: [illegible]. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted.
NOTICE OF HEARING:
OCTOBER 1, 2010, at 11:00 A.M. in Dept. 31, 201 13TH Street, Oakland, CA 94612
A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once a week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: East Bay Express, Alameda County, California.
Dated: July 1, 2010.
Signed: [illegible], Judge of the Superior Court
7/7, 7/14, 7/21, 7/28/2010

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WILD SEX IN THE WORKING CLASS

How to handle vibrating panties and errant porn sites in the office

By Dan Savage

My boss/CEO lives and works in a different city, but most of her mail arrives at my office because, it is the company's official address. I routinely open mail and packages addressed to her. Usually they contain documents or software, but today I opened a package with her name on it to find something completely different: a pair of vibrating panties.

Do your amazing sex-advice skills provide you with any ideas on how I should handle this? It will be very obvious that the package has been opened, even if I try to tape it back up and send it to her home address. But if I do nothing, sooner or later she's going to wonder where her shipment is. We're a small, casual company and she's a pretty confident and outgoing person, but I can't really predict how she will react to this. Would it be weird for me to just be up-front about this situation? Should I just throw in a sticky note that says "Whoops! Have fun! ☺" and send it on? Or should I pretend this never happened?

Avoid The Awkward

Emoticons are never the right answer. ATA. Please make an emoticon free note of it.

Now here's what my amazing sex-advice Spidey sense is telling me. Vibrating panties are not a sex toy. ATA, they're a gag gift. Check your boss's schedule. Any bridal showers coming up? Bachelorette parties? A friend holding a bash to mourn/celebrate a recent divorce?

There's a small chance that your boss doesn't know much about sex toys and purchased a pair of vibrating panties for herself and intends to wear them on long flights (if she can get them past security). But you should nevertheless treat this pair of panties like a misplaced gag gift. ATA, and not a workplace crisis. This isn't a "situation." It's a shipping error.

Tape up the box and send it off to your boss and forget about it. If she feels a need to bring it up, she'll bring it up.

Yesterday I was finishing a conversation with my boss via instant message from my home computer. I meant to send her a legitimate link but because I used the wrong combination of keys, I accidentally entered a several-day-old porn link that was still in the memory and hit send before I noticed my mistake. I'm a 30-year-old male my boss is a few years younger and female, and she's generally cool. Once I realized what I had done, I immediately told her not to click the link and I sent the right one. The URL left little to the imagination about what kind of link it was.

I'm horribly embarrassed. How should I handle it? I'm inclined to never speak of it again unless she does first.

Jerk From Home

Workplace power dynamics being what they are — bosses can fire employees, employees can't fire bosses — you do need to put something in writing.

Send a brief e-mail to your boss detailing just how that happened — IMing from your home computer, not your work computer — apologize one more time, and state that you'll take care that it doesn't happen again. You could still get in trouble with HR if your boss decides to make a case of it, but you'll be able to point to a contemporaneous e-mail that details your side of this story. I.e., no accident you weren't rubbing out in front of a work computer.

I wanted to thank you for drawing an much attention to Sex at Dawn. I am going to get it as soon as possible so I can better understand myself. I have always felt a certain amount of shame because I've never had a monogamous relationship. Having been married fourteen years, married at nineteen, which I know is a no-no in your book) I've had plenty of temptation and only given in a few times. Those events felt like they were sinning my sanity, they never had any thing to do with me loving my husband any less. It wasn't until I started listening to your advice that I realized that maybe I wasn't the problem. For all these years I felt like shit because I couldn't be monogamous. Thanks for shining me in to evolution, reptile brains, etc.

M

Thanks for the nice note, M, now go forth and cheat no more. (ie, don't be a cheating piece of shit. If you're incapable of being monogamous don't make monogamous commitments that you're damn well going to break.

And to all the outraged folks writing in to ask if I'm seriously suggesting that no one should ever be monogamous: That's not what I'm saying — and it's not what the authors of *Sex at Dawn* are arguing either. The point of *Sex at Dawn* isn't that no one should attempt to be monogamous or that people who've made monogamous commitments have a license to cheat on their partners. For the record, I'm happy to acknowledge that there are lots of good reasons to be monogamous and/or very nearly monogamous e.g. children and other sexually transmitted infections.

What the authors of *Sex at Dawn* believe — *and what I think they prove* — is that we are a naturally nonmonogamous species despite what we've been told for millennia by preachers and for centuries by scientists and that is why so many people have such a hard time remaining monogamous over the long haul. I'm not saying that everyone everywhere has to be nonmonogamous, the authors of *Sex at Dawn* don't make that argument either (lots of monogamists however do run counter to nature), I'm saying that everyone everywhere should be monogamous.) The point is this. People need to understand why living monogamous is so much harder than they've been led to believe it will be. In some cases, this understanding may help people find the courage to seek out nonmonogamous relationships and/or arrangements. Understanding that monogamy is a struggle for most people — and being able to be honest with our partners — may actually help some people remain monogamous.

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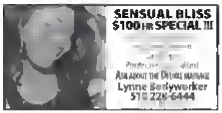
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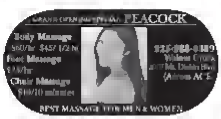
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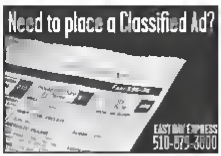
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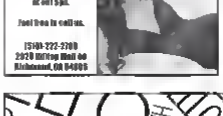






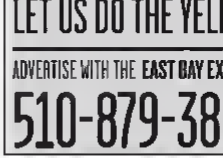












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